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March 1995

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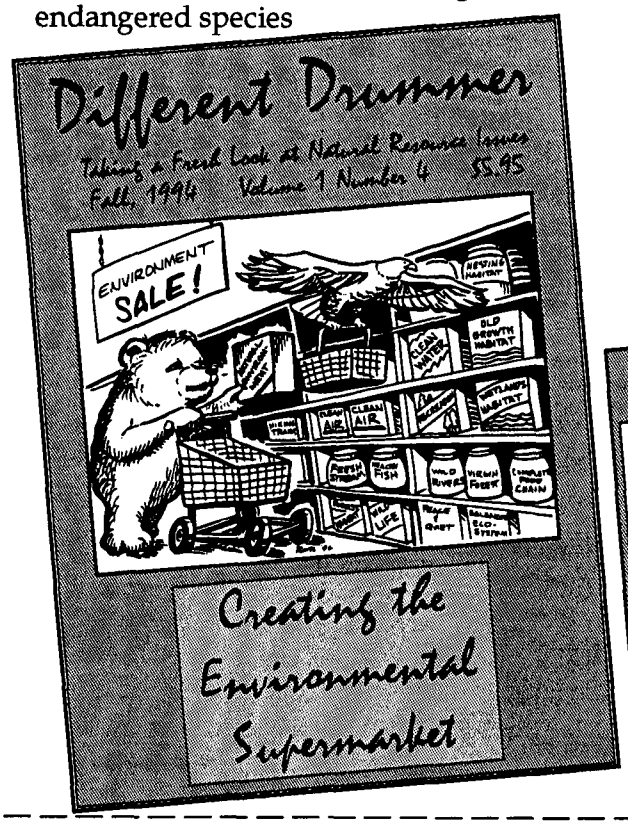
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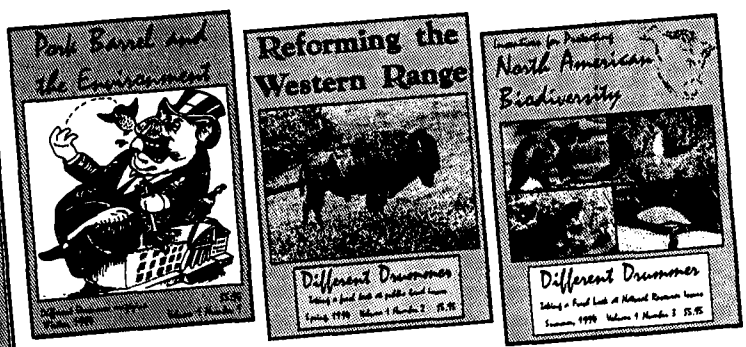

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REASON

Free Minds and Free Markets

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Future Tense

By Virginia I. Postrel

Why Washington can't stand Newt's futurism

I FIRST MET NEWT GINGRICH IN 1983 AT the World Science Fiction Convention in Baltimore. He was the only member of Congress who thought the WorldCon worth addressing. I was the only representative of the national media, specifically of *The Wall Street Journal*, who thought his speech worth covering.

The political establishment—left, right, and center—hates self-described "conservative futurist" Gingrich's fascination with big ideas. Journalists use words like "techno-freak," "dreamy," "grandiose," and "quirky" to describe his departures from approved Washington scripts into speculations about where America and the world are headed. They delight in poking fun at the neologisms of his advisers, from Alvin and Heidi Toffler's "demassification," to Michael Vlahos's "Brain Lords," to the whole notion of the "virtual."

"Predicted with Virtual Certainty: Gingrich & the Technoids Look Into Their Crystal Balls," was the headline on a snide *Washington Post* Style article poking fun at a conference in which the Progress & Freedom Foundation, a Newt-affiliated think tank, attempted to expand Washington's mind.

An anonymous "leading conservative ideologue," quoted in a *New Yorker* article called "Lost in Space," best expresses the official line: "For my taste, Gingrich is too futuristic, too psychobabble, too technobabble—he's a weird mishmash of all kinds of things. There is an ongoing attempt to try to keep Newt from going off the deep end. There is a certain grandiosity to his self-understanding which comes from Toffler, an end-of-an-era, the whole-world-is-changing feeling he projects. The Republican Presidential candidates are really more conventional than Newt."

And we all know that's what Republicans are supposed to be—conventional. Like George Bush.

Gingrich's futurism has its problems, certainly, some obvious, some deep. On the obvious level, it lacks discipline, racing to embrace cool-sounding ideas before analyzing them. It overgeneralizes, selecting from history, business, and technology the data that fit its preconceptions. And it massacres the English language.

But these traits are not unique to Gingrich—as anyone who has ventured into Al Gore's intellectually incoherent and nearly unreadable *Earth in the Balance* can testify. The culture *meisters* of Washington and New York are positively gaga over futurism when it takes a properly apocalyptic form—one that makes work for government, or at least emphasizes its importance.

Paul Kennedy's declinism, Robert Kaplan's Third World threats, Lester Brown's environmental hysteria, and *National Review*'s immigration panics all get respectful hearings. Charles Murray may be politically incorrect, but people don't think his "custodial democracy" dystopia is goofy (though it recently appeared in a two-part *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* episode). Robert Reich and Michael Vlahos tell the same tale of income stratification by brain power, but Reich knows enough to decry the rise of "symbolic analysts." Attitude is everything.

Gingrich's futurism threatens Washington not because it is full of buzzwords or half-baked notions about tax credits for laptop computers. It threatens the controllers of convention because it says they, and even Gingrich, aren't especially important. It declares that the most significant people, events, ideas, and innovations are outside Washington, outside government, outside convention. It dares to suggest that society changes first and government (and media) must adapt. And in the cold war between the Two Cultures, it sides with science.

Gingrich talked about the two cultures in his speech to the Progress & Freedom Foundation conference. In a 1959 essay, he explained, British novelist and physicist C.P. Snow posited that the humanities and sciences were moving away from each other and that humanists would soon be utterly ignorant of the science that shapes our world. Snow's prophecy has come true, said Gingrich, and as a result, "those who know are inarticulate and those who are articulate don't know."

Gingrich's idea that scientists and engineers are the people "who know" and that politicians, reporters, and policy wonks are merely articulate is a tad reductionist. But it contains enough truth to expose a deeply entrenched anti-intellectualism among Washington and New York's cognitive elites—an anti-intellectualism as common among conventional conservatives as among Clintonites.

Neoconservative humanities specialists, the conservative movement's arbiters of intellectualism, are particularly distrustful of the sciences and tend to wrap their ignorance in contempt. At a meeting of the National Association of Scholars, for instance, an organization official introduced an eminent physicist by saying, "He works on quarks, whatever those are"—a statement equivalent to saying, "He works on T. S. Eliot, whoever that is." It's no wonder "leading conservative ideologues" have trouble with Newt's technophilia. It threatens not only their power but their intellectual status.

Conservatives, however, have produced no reaction as hysterical as the at-

tack on *Wired* magazine run by *The New Republic*. Like Gingrich, *Wired* sometimes lacks rigor. And it has its excesses, among them a notoriously busy design. But with a circulation of 110,000, it can't really be more "esoteric" than *The New Republic*, which has a circulation of 101,000. *Wired* just has a very different attitude toward Washington.

What bugs author Gary Chapman, the former executive director of Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility, is *Wired*'s "smug disengagement from the thorny problems facing postindustrial societies and, most annoyingly,...its over-the-top narcissism." *Wired* writers and, by implication, *Wired* readers are proud of their knowledge, excited about technology, and hostile to government bossiness. They want to be left alone. That makes them contemptible, if not downright dangerous, in Chapman's world view. And, he says, "the Newtoids on Capitol Hill... are clearly *Wired* material."

The real difference between Chapman and *Wired*, or the *Post* and Gingrich, is how they define social responsibility and "the thorny problems facing postindustrial societies"—and what they see as the solutions. Is technology the problem and government the answer, or vice versa? Are individuals important as free actors, or as members of a collective?

When Gingrich pushes social responsibility, he describes individuals helping individuals, not government seizing and redistributing work and property. To fight unemployment in the knowledge economy, he promotes two hours of homework a night, private programs to pay poor kids to read, and, yes, incentives to get computers to the poor—individual by individual. (Not, as Al Gore proposes, by wiring public institutions to a nationalized superhighway.)

The tax-credits-for-laptops plan reveals what's actually wrong with Gingrich's futurism. He himself can't really let go of central control. He loves technology and wants to make sure everyone else does, too. That's why in the early '80s, he was advocating huge public works in space and a Minitel-style national information infrastructure. Gingrich is always in danger of falling into the technocratic traps that built the regulatory state—the notion that government planners, like engineers designing widgets, can build a good society from the top down. His futurism is out of date.

Engineering-as-metaphor is out. Biology and complexity are in. The world is messy, organic, out of control. It evolves by trial and error. If we want progress, nobody can be in charge. Progress is the unintended result of dynamic processes, not a predetermined outcome of someone's official static plan.

SO, A NEW READING LIST FOR NEWT: Start with a great book dedicated to "the unknown civilization that is growing in America," *The Constitution of Liberty* by F. A. Hayek. It has much to say about progress and freedom, and its postscript "Why I Am Not a Conservative" explains a lot about the people attacking your love of the future. Read Hayek's essay, "The Uses of Knowledge in Society," which is essential to understanding the knowledge economy, and Thomas Sowell's masterful elaboration, *Knowledge and Decisions*. To understand how the growth and diffusion of technology depend on local circumstances, not simple extrapolation, delve into economic historian Nathan Rosenberg's work.

There are lots of pop books out on complexity and evolution. Possible starting places include *Out of Control* by Kevin Kelly; *Bionomics* by Michael Rothschild; and *Complexity* by Michael Waldrop. (Take them all with a grain of salt, however, especially when they generalize about economics.)

To expand your mind in more poetical directions, read Frederick Turner's *Tempest, Flute, & Oz* and the forthcoming *Culture of Hope*. Add Richard Rodriguez's *Days of Obligation*, an organic consideration of cultural paradoxes.

Above all, don't be embarrassed to say you care enough about the future to speculate on it. And don't be hubristic enough to think you can determine, or even predict, it.

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Art Director Barbara Burch

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Contributing Editors
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Cartoonists
Chip Bok, Henry Payne, Scott Stantis

Legal Adviser Don Erik Franzen

Editorial and Production Offices
3415 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90034
310-391-2245

Washington Office
1001 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 200 South
Washington, DC 20004
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Bad Influence

By Brian Doherty

Tax breaks aren't corporate welfare. Cash giveaways are.

THE NEW REPUBLICAN-LED CONgress promises major changes in "welfare"—giveaways to the relatively destitute. But the federal government is equally adept at throwing other people's money at those who haven't even a surface excuse for needing it.

The recent "Mexican bailout," $25 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to help keep Mexico solvent so it can eventually pay off its debt, is a good example. In essence, that move aided American banks improvident enough to toss good money after bad at the Mexican government.

If the new congressional regime wants to prove that they mean an end to business-as-usual, they must cut off federal cash flow to the influential as well as the marginal. But contrary to Robert Reich, who has taken to railing against "corporate welfare," letting corporations keep their earnings isn't "welfare"; giving them other taxpayers' money is.

Any supposed devotion to free markets and tight-belted government is a sad joke if we can't end such programs as:

• The National Institute of Standards and Technology's Advanced Technology Program, which in fiscal 1995 is dispersing $431 million to such starvelings as IBM, Hewlett-Packard, and Eastman Kodak to pursue projects such as developing new computer storage systems—projects for which there ought to be private markets, or no market at all.

• The Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles, which gave around $250 million in 1994 to General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler to help them do what they are in business to do: develop better cars for their customers.

• The Agriculture Department's Market Promotion Program, which pays for overseas advertising for such companies as E. J. Gallo ($15.9 million from 1986–92), Sunkist ($66.9 million), and Tyson's Foods ($9.9 million).

• The $587 million in seed money to be given over the next five years to support flat-panel display development, with the money going to AT&T, Rockwell International, and Xerox, among others.

• The Export-Import Bank, dispensing $831.8 million in fiscal 1995 for export credit loans, loan guarantees, and grants to businesses trying to sell overseas.

• The Overseas Private Investment Corporation, dropping $66.1 million in fiscal 1995 to guarantee against such risks as sudden inconvertibility, nationalization, and political violence that can accompany investing in foreign nations.

Just as "normal" welfare spending has malign cultural effects that outweigh its budgetary burden, so does corporate welfare. Trying to counteract bad economic decisions by foreign governments to protect foolish U.S. banks merely prolongs and worsens an inevitable day of reckoning. Giving cash to those with the most political influence tilts the market in favor of the already successful. Guaranteeing risky foreign or export ventures eliminates the burden of making intelligent decisions in the first place, and thus helps bring about the disasters they are meant to ease.

Corporate welfare isn't just bad business. It's bad civics. It mocks the ideals of limited government and democracy, by giving government a role in meeting the most picayune business expenses of the wealthy and influential and proving that enough pull can get you special benefits that the unconnected are denied—at the expense of all citizens.

If Gingrich and his boys can't put a stop to corporate welfare (correctly defined), it'll be hard to believe that they have the will to accomplish the rest of their impressive-sounding agenda. ®

Budget Bunkum

Apparently Dave Barry ("All I Think Is That It's Stupid," Dec.) does not fully understand "budget cutting" in Washington. He said, "If we're spending $853 trillion on some program now, and next year we spend any less, that's 'budget cutting' to them."

He has got it all wrong! If we're spending $853 trillion on some program this year, and the agency asks for $983 trillion for that program next year, but Congress gives them only $973 trillion for that year—*that* is budget cutting in Washington!

Stanley A. Cohen
Bethesda, MD

Whose Body?

There's more to why radical feminists oppose reproductive technology than Wendy McElroy reported in "Breeder Reactionaries" (Dec.). In defending abortion, feminists argue that the fetus is a part of the mother's body and therefore her property. Their assertion becomes obviously false when mother and offspring are living miles apart. Today, children are conceived in vitro and kept as embryos in cold storage tanks. Artificial wombs are in the works, and if the theory is correct, men will be able to carry a child to term. One day, technology will enable a child to live outside the woman's body for the full nine months of prenatal development.

The "woman's body, woman's right" defense of the choice to kill by abortion is bound to fall as reproductive technology becomes sufficiently sophisticated. Today's feminists are well aware of their crumbling foundation.

Doris Gordon
National Coordinator
Libertarians for Life
Wheaton, MD

Presidential Prevaricators

Thomas W. Hazlett's December column "Clintonomicus" gives the mistaken impression that Clinton's economic advisers are principled individuals who stood up and voiced their concerns over Clinton's health-care price controls. Bob Woodward may have accurately described Laura Tyson and Alan Blinder's opposition to price controls during closed-door policy meetings, but after 565 economists (including Mr. Hazlett) sent President Clinton a letter in January calling on him to eliminate price controls from his health-care program, Tyson and Blinder publicly denied that the plan contained price controls and claimed that the economists were "misinformed" and "had not read the proposal." Ms. Tyson publicly asserted the absurd notion that there were "fundamental economic differences" between price controls and price caps.

Less than two months later, at a policy luncheon where reporters continually quoted passages from the health-care bill, Tyson finally showed what the *National Journal* called "a glimmer of intellectual honesty...she allowed that 'there are controls' in the section of the plan that requires regional alliances to establish a fee schedule for services to patients who choose a fee-for-service insurance plan."

While it may be too much to ask that senior administration officials honestly answer questions, it would be nice if they did not actively disseminate information they knew was false.

John R. Lott Jr.
Center for the Study of the Economy and the State
University of Chicago
Chicago, IL

Vaccination Cure

Robert Pollock's "Shot in the Dark" (Nov.) was right on target. The Vaccines for Children Program's premises—that profiteering drug companies price families out of the vaccine market, and that government must purchase the vaccines at a forced discount—are both false.

The Center for Disease Control's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* of October 7, 1994, reported on a 1991–92 series of studies on why inner-city minority children don't get vaccinated. The study found these children often don't get vaccinated because their vaccinations are not checked and updated at every visit to the doctor. This happens often enough that the program's goals can be met if health-care providers give all needed shots each time they see a child.

If providers and parents change their shot-giving practices by maintaining accurate records, checking them at every doctor visit, and giving all needed vaccines simultaneously, the children will get immunized. Nothing in the current faulty practices has to do with the price of vaccines. None of the necessary changes require government intervention, theft of income from drug company shareholders, or government takeover of the health-care system. All that is required is some good common sense attention by parents and doctors.

Charles K. Young
Majuro, Marshall Islands

Importing Crime?

In Virginia Postrel's editorial "Memory Lapse" (Nov.), she dismisses the prob-

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lems with the prisoners and mentally ill who came over on the Mariel boats as a "myth" because there were only 5,000 prisoners or mentally ill amongst the 125,000 who came.

This may be a mere 4 percent of the total, but to me it is a very frightening figure. Five thousand criminals in a country suffering from horrific crime in the streets, and with prisons that are overflowing, are significant.

I would think that Mr. Castro would hardly liberate political prisoners, but rather the worst dregs in his prisons. Even if we get some good people (which I am sure is the case), I can't buy the logic that it's OK to accept 4 percent criminals to get the rest, since we haven't solved the problem of our own home-grown criminals.

Emanuel Batler
Toronto, Ontario

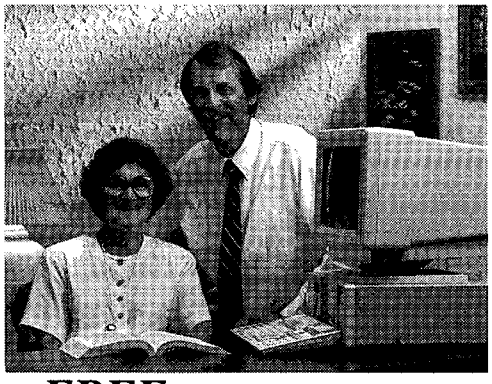
Ms. Postrel replies: Perhaps Mr. Batler wasn't surprised to find out that the infamous Mariel boatlift contained such a small percentage of bad apples. I was. Based on casual media references and political rhetoric, I had assumed at least a majority of Marielitos were prisoners or mental patients. That perception, which I believe is widespread, is the myth of Mariel.

How many Marielitos were criminals is a matter of some dispute and depends on how you define "criminal." Some of the refugees were in fact political prisoners; others had been imprisoned for petty theft or prostitution, still others for being homosexuals. The U.S. government considered all of 60 sufficiently dangerous to detain immediately. About another 2,000 have been arrested for crimes in the United States serious enough to warrant repatriation to Cuba; Cuba has taken back about 600 of them.

I refer readers who want more details on the Marielitos to Charles Oliver's well-researched article in *Investor's Business Daily*, September 23, 1994.

The broader point is this: It is profoundly dangerous to deny freedom to individuals by lumping them in a group and letting the government determine the worthiness of that group. It is even more dangerous to base the worthiness test on a tiny fraction of the total group. Yet this kind of guilt by association is driving the entire immigration debate (not to mention the gun-control debate).

I fully expect to wake up one morning to discover an article in the *Los Angeles Times* reporting that an authoritative study has shown that 35-year-old white women from the South have relatively low IQs, are less likely than average to be literate, are more likely than average to be unemployed, and cost California taxpayers more than they pay in taxes. I suspect these "findings" may in fact be true. I certainly would not want my liberties to depend on proving them false.



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Broken Contract

GOP double-speak on block grants

By Rick Henderson

REPUBLICANS IN THE 103RD CONgress nearly derailed the 1994 crime bill when they complained about provisions that sanctioned congressional micromanagement of state and local law-enforcement efforts. As examples, Republicans questioned why federal anticrime dollars should be directed toward such programs as midnight basketball, art instruction for graffiti vandals, or a grant to a college in the district of then-House Judiciary Chairman Jack Brooks (D-Tex.). GOP lawmakers argued that federal dollars should go in "block grants" to state and local governments with few strings attached so that local officials could decide how best to deal with their own law-enforcement problems.

It's a nice sentiment, but the Republicans haven't followed through. The "Taking Back Our Streets" provision of the House Republicans' Contract with America would repeal the "social spending" in the '94 bill. But the provision's "Law Enforcement Block Grants" would in fact hamstring law-enforcement officials.

The block-grant provision permits the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the Department of Justice to give as much as $10 billion in federal tax dollars "directly" to local officials under very stringent conditions:

1) The local government must deposit the money in a trust fund.

2) It must spend all of the money within two years of receiving it.

3) It must obey all of the spending regulations that apply to other government funds, along with accounting guidelines that will be developed by the director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the comptroller general of the United States.

4) Block-grant spending can be audited by BJA and the comptroller general at any time; either can require detailed reports on how the money is being spent.

5) The money can only be spent on hiring or training new police officers, paying overtime to existing officers, or buying new law-enforcement equipment.

Allocating the money is complicated as well. Each state will get at least one-quarter of 1 percent of the total funds. In the first year, the rest of the money will be parceled out by formula; the areas with the highest rates of violent crime will get the most money. This formula would apply to grants that are as small as $5,000. So much for cutting strings.

And conceivably, cities and counties would qualify for higher grants when their crime rate went *up*, not down. Those communities that implemented effective crime-fighting policies would be penalized by the feds.

Just after the election, Newt Gingrich said it would be foolish for Republicans to replace liberal social-engineering programs with conservative ones. The GOP's action on these "block grants" might show if congressional leaders mean what they say. ®

Creative Difficulties

Why some countries have more jobs

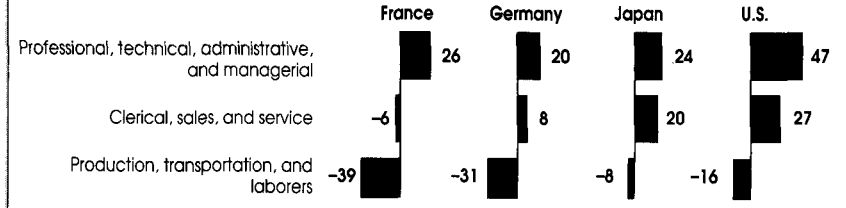
By Nick Gillespie

Why do some industrial economies offer fewer employment opportunities than others? A recent study by the McKinsey Global Institute, an in-house research arm of the management consultant firm McKinsey & Co., concludes that the main culprit is product market restrictions designed to "protect existing interests including existing jobs."

Hence, the reason the United States outperformed other industrial nations in job creation during the decade studied (1980–90) was that the relative lack of regulations in the United States allowed for more innovation and new product development—and, by extension, more employees. Europe's anemic job-growth rates, says *Employment Performance*, stem from governmental interference with the "natural evolution of the economy," "especially in high-growth service industries." The study, prepared with assistance from such liberal economists as Nobel laureate Bob Solow of MIT and Martin Baily of The Brookings Institution, also documents that, contrary to conventional wisdom, "The wage distribution of service jobs in the U.S. is almost identical to the distribution in manufacturing."

Employment Growth by Occupation 1980–90*

Jobs created per thousand working age population**



*France, 1982–91; Germany 1980–91; Japan., 1979–90; U.S., 1979–90; all countries extrapolated to 1980–90.
**Adjusted for growth in the working age population
Source: OECD Jobs Study; McKinsey analysis

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

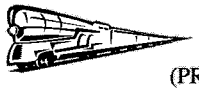
Balance Sheet

By Rick Henderson

Assets

Open Line. What a difference an election makes. New Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Larry Pressler (R-S.D.) wants to privatize the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. And a bill sponsored by Pressler would repeal most cable rate regulations, let Baby Bells manufacture telecommunications equipment, and, within three years, have cable, local telephone companies, and long-distance carriers compete for each other's markets.

Express Train. Using management strategies only a government bureaucracy could fathom, Amtrak inadvertently makes privatization more likely: It will sack 5,500 employees and run fewer trains. If you want sympathy from your customers, don't cut their service! Look for OPEN UNDER NEW (PRIVATE) MANAGEMENT signs at your local railway station soon.



Power Play. Local electric and gas utilities help jump-start the information superhighway. For the past four years, the electric company in Glasgow, Kentucky, has offered cable TV; the local cable franchise had to drop its basic rates by 40 percent to compete. The power company in Manassas, Virginia, reports *The Washington Times*, has fiber-optic lines in place that could carry telephone, video, and electric services. And Baltimore Gas & Electric competes with Bell Atlantic, letting business customers connect with long-distance phone carriers.

States' Riots. The war against unfunded federal mandates gets serious. Thirteen states—including California, Illinois, Michigan, and New Jersey—have not complied with the motor-voter law, which lets anyone who applies for a driver's license or for welfare simultaneously register to vote. California Gov. Pete Wilson, saying the bill will cost $35.8 million to enforce, asks a federal court to declare the law unconstitutional. And led by Wilson and Virginia's George Allen, a similar number of governors revolt against the Environmental Protection Agency's auto-emissions testing mandates.

Liabilities

Speech Code. The New Jersey Supreme Court, saying free speech is "fundamentally more important" than property rights, converts shopping malls into government property. Since malls have "large open spaces available to the public and suitable for numerous uses," the court says, they can't prevent protesters from distributing leaflets. The ruling implies that *any* large commercial building (an office complex? a cinema?) must also allow indoor leafletting. *The New York Times* predicts this state-court ruling will encourage leafletters to file similar lawsuits in other states.

Bug Bomb. Next week, on *America's Most Wanted*: butterfly collectors. The Fish and Wildlife Service rushes species of collectible but supposedly rare insects onto the list of protected species, then prosecutes collectors for "poaching." Three California butterfly collectors, Thomas Kral, Richard Skalski, and Marc Grinnell, face as many as five years in prison and $250,000 in fines for "conspiring" to collect and trade butterflies taken from national parks.

Ruble Rabble. The General Accounting Office says Russia has more than two chances in three of defaulting on its $110 billion in overseas loans. In a report estimating the probability of loan defaults for 170 countries, the GAO says Russia is only 32.4-percent likely to repay its debt.

Infernal Revenuers. Happy tax season: For the first time since the 1980s, the IRS will conduct line-by-line audits on more than 150,000 randomly selected returns to monitor tax compliance and check on cheaters. *The Wall Street Journal* says these "audits from hell" can cost a taxpayer "many thousands of dollars in legal or accounting fees," even if you end up owing no more taxes. While tax specialists argue the feds should reimburse audit targets for reasonable expenses, the IRS says tough luck.

Fan Club

D.C. joins the private sports-arena bandwagon

By Rick Henderson

On December 28, Abe Pollin gave sports fans and taxpayers in the District of Columbia a late Christmas present when he agreed to finance a new downtown sports arena himself. The 71-year-old owner of the NBA Bullets and NHL Capitals promised to raise $180 million to build a 23,800-seat facility a few blocks from Capitol Hill.

Pollin initially had asked the city to put up half the money, and the D.C. Council had approved a $90-million bond issue to be repaid by new taxes. Congress, however, would have to endorse any bond issue. And last fall, Robert Johnson, president of Black Entertainment Television, offered to build a sports arena and pay for it himself. Since Johnson doesn't own a sports franchise, he asked for assurances that if Pollin sold his teams Johnson would get a chance to buy them.

With Johnson's competing offer on the table and the city's fiscal crisis making national headlines, local officials convinced Pollin to come up with most of the money himself. Taxpayers will still spend nearly $15 million to purchase the site and perhaps twice that much to prepare it for the arena, but the arena will get no other government subsidies. Pollin will pay $600,000 a year to lease the property.

Owners of major sports franchises have often tried to hold cities for ransom, threatening to move their teams if taxpayers wouldn't finance new stadiums. Washington's new arena will become part of a new trend: predominantly private sports complexes. Boston Garden will be replaced by the $160-million Shawmut Center, which will get all of its money privately. Philadelphia's $215-million CoreStates Center will receive only $20 million from local and state taxpayers. And less than 15 percent of the $262 million spent to build the Rose Arena Garden in Portland will come from local taxes.

Running From Wolves

Ranchers see a threat to their property in federal wolf program

By Brian Doherty

ALL RANCHERS FEAR PREDATORS that threaten to kill their sheep or cattle. But the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's scheme to reintroduce the wolf to the Yellowstone Park region and central Idaho has them fearing another predator: federal land-use regulators.

"We're not really dealing with an endangered species here, we're dealing with land-use control," says Ken Hamilton of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation. Hamilton's group and others are suing to end Fish & Wildlife's plan to reintroduce wolves into an area they've been absent from since the 1940s—most of them killed as part of a federal program in the early part of the century.

A federal judge in January rejected an injunction to delay the wolves' reintroduction pending resolution of the lawsuit. Thus, 30 wolves will be reintroduced immediately, with more to come each year.

Hamilton fears a bevy of controls could skulk into the lives of local ranchers and loggers along with the wolves. Such controls could include more restricted grazing permits, harsh legal punishment for harming the wolves, restrictions on predator controls, and timber sales halted on the mere claim of seeing a wolf track in the area. Ranchers also have the more prosaic concern that the hungry predators will eat their livestock.

All, says Jim Streeter of the National Wilderness Institute, to protect a species that isn't even in danger of extinction. Under the Endangered Species Act, he says, "a local population can be considered a species even if the species as a whole isn't endangered. Wolves and grizzly bears can be listed as endangered because of endangered local populations. Extinction is not an issue with the wolf."

Streeter also raises doubts about whether the wolves, who are to be taken from parts of Canada, are even full-blooded. "There is some thought those wolves might have some coyote and dog genetics," he says. "There have been three contradictory opinions from Interior about whether hybrids are protected under the ESA."

Others oppose the program for different reasons. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund is also suing to stop the program, since wolves introduced under it will be considered "experimental" and thus lack complete ESA protection. They want to wait for the natural wolf migration they expect to occur. ®

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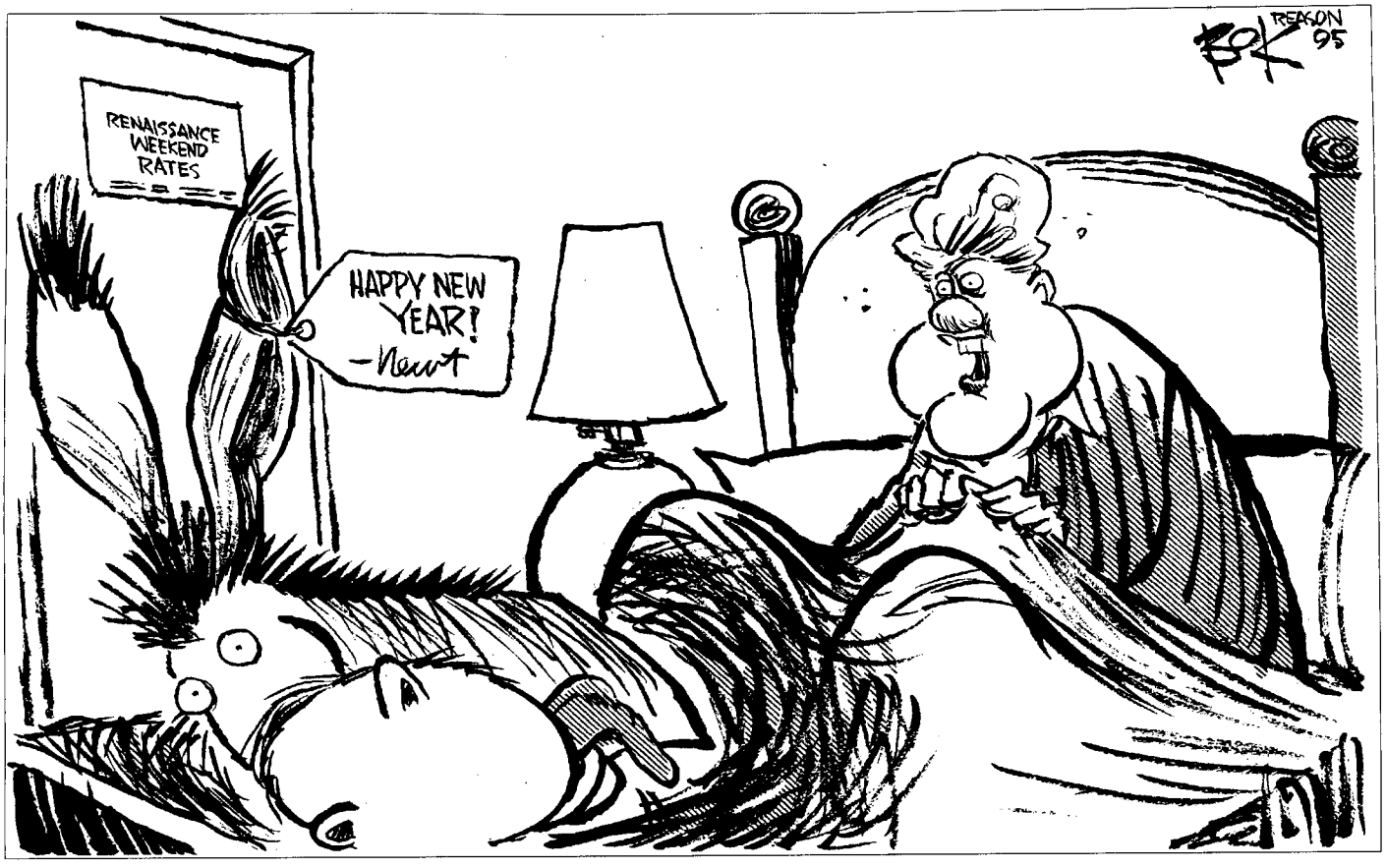

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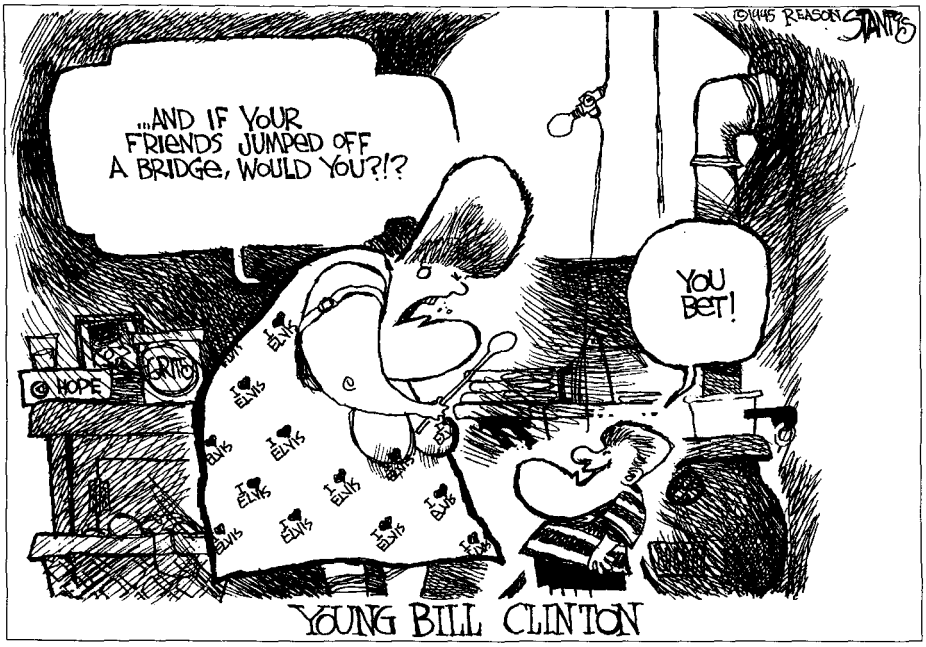


SCOTT STANTIS

■ **Fort Wayne, Indiana, resident Joe** Carlisle called police one evening to complain that someone was shooting at his house. Police investigators found that Carlisle had earlier placed a loaded semi-automatic handgun in his oven, then forgot it was there and turned the oven on. Carlisle apparently offered no explanation as to why he kept his gun in his oven.

■ **In Israel, the government barely fended** off a no-confidence vote prompted by defenders of the biblical King David. During a debate, someone offered the example of King David's conquests of other peoples as justification for keeping land seized in war from the Arabs. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres replied that King David did things, such as commit adultery and subjugate others, that were wrong. That prompted howls of protests from the country's religious parties, who argued that people should not be free to criticize King David.

■ **In Brasilia, Brazil, an unemployed maid** and mother of seven burned a winning lottery ticket after her minister told her she would "sink in sin in hell" if she collected her winnings. Maria Nascimento's husband, also unemployed, beat her up and left her when he found out what she had done.

■ **In Stockholm, Sweden, Irene Wachenfeldt** has been forced to resign from her post as high school teacher. Seems she stripped in front of one of her adult classes in an effort to drive home her lesson about the importance of loving one's body. Her students have protested her dismissal.

■ **In New Orleans, a woman who used her** deceased husband's stored sperm to become pregnant has gone to court to have the child declared the man's child and heir. She wants to win Social Security survivor's benefits for the girl.

■ **Linda Wertheimer, host of National Public** Radio's *All Things Considered*, was asked by a caller on C-SPAN about government funding of public radio. Ms. Wertheimer interrupted the caller to dispute the basis of the question. NPR, she steadfastly maintained, receives no taxpayer support. In fact, it gets about $40 million a year in tax dollars. Following the exchange, NPR announced that it is preparing a fact sheet for staffers on the sources of NPR's funds.

■ **Washington state trooper Lane W.** Jackstadt has been charged with illegal imprisonment and official misconduct. Jackstadt stopped a couple for speeding and found out they were trying to get the woman to an appointment for an abortion. He then told the couple he was a Christian, began lecturing them on the evil of abortion, held them for 45 minutes in an attempt to cause them to miss the appointment, and forced them to go to a church-run counseling session. Jackstadt's lawyer claims that his client is being persecuted for his beliefs.

■ **The world's top chess players went to** Moscow for a tournament. What they got were threats, beatings, and robberies. The Macedonian team captain was beaten into unconsciousness and robbed twice. A U.S. player was mugged, and the robbers threatened his life if he did not come back the next day with more money. Other chess players reported that someone pounded on their hotel doors in the middle of the night and threatened them.

■ **In University Park, Texas, 16-year-old** Chase Russell wanted to improve his baseball game, so he took his savings and had a batting cage built in his parents' back yard. Now the city is threatening the family with huge fines for violating zoning ordinances and for failing to get the proper building permits.

■ **Tennessee's Henry County High School** had to cancel its Christmas concert following a brawl in which the chorus teacher allegedly smashed the band director in the face with a chair. Kenneth Humphrey, who is also a county commissioner and a minister, was charged with aggravated assault. He and Martin Paschall had apparently gotten into an argument over who would make an announcement at the concert.

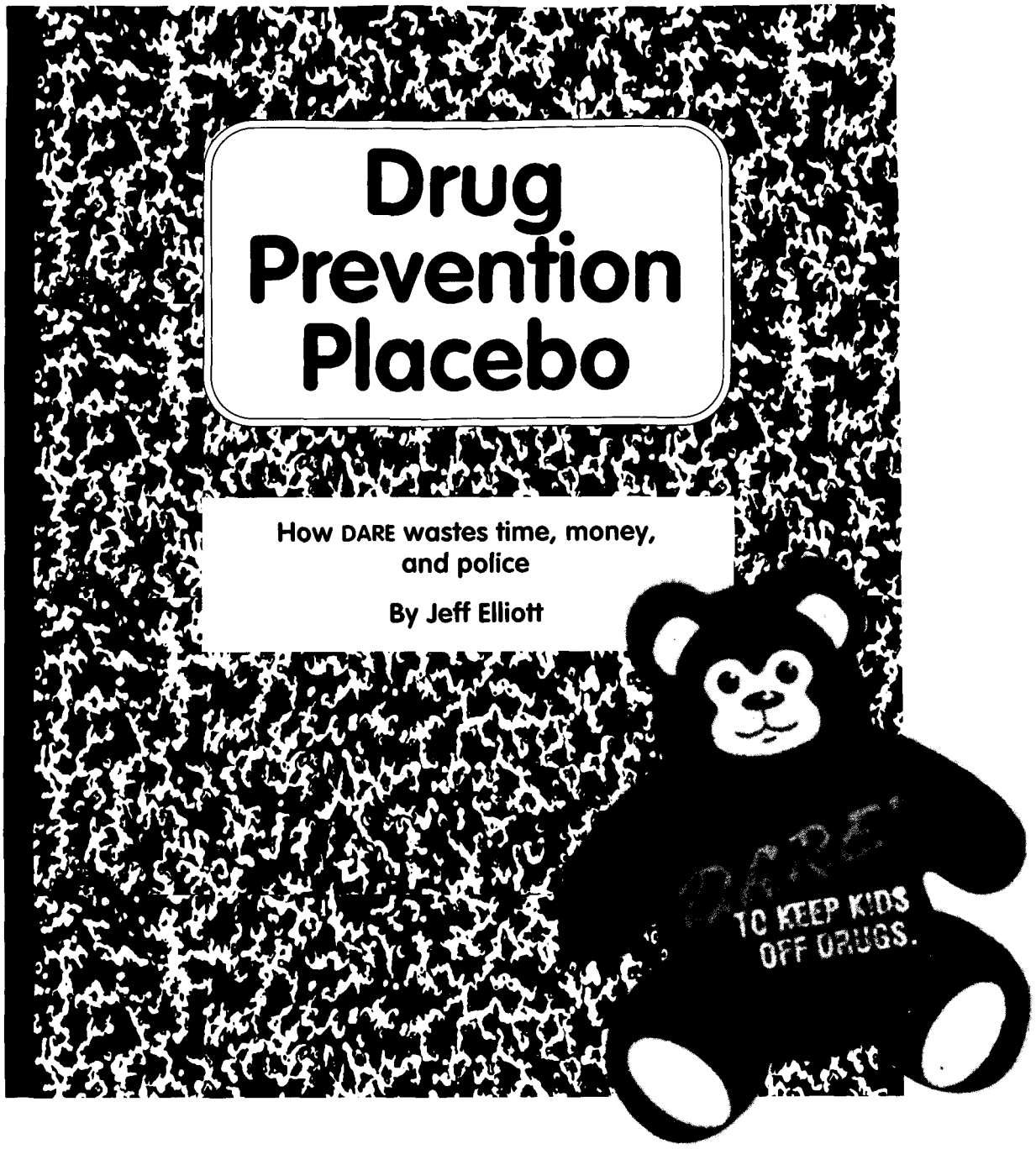
■ **Hitler, Gingrich, what's the difference?** In a Christmas Day speech in Great Britain, Jesse Jackson spoke out against the "status quo." "In South Africa the status quo was called racism. In Germany it was called fascism. Now in Britain and the United States, it is called conservatism," he said.

—Charles Oliver

Drug Prevention Placebo

How DARE wastes time, money, and police

By Jeff Elliott



The October 1994 government flyer seemed like sweet vindication to the thousands of parents, police, and teachers who supported the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program, better known by the acronym DARE. "The D.A.R.E. Program: A Review of Prevalence, User Satisfaction, and Effectiveness," the headline on the single page boasted, describing a new study of the drug-education program. More happy news followed. "Not only is DARE widespread and popular, but demand for it is high," read the flyer. DARE's "...appeal cuts across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines [with] considerable support for expansion of the program."

Sweet vindication indeed. Since its inception in 1983, the DARE curriculum had rapidly spread from the Los Angeles area to schools across the country. In fact, more than half of all schools in the United States currently use the program; almost 20 million schoolkids a year are visited at least once by a DARE instructor. Despite such success, however, critics had been increasingly vocal in recent years, attacking the program as a costly and ineffective way of teaching kids about the perils of drug abuse. They claimed that DARE was just another untested pedagogical gimmick that served no purpose other than soaking up private donations and local, state, and federal tax dollars.

The newly released study, then, would simultaneously silence naysayers while boosting DARE's shot at more public funds and deeper penetration into schools. This is no penny ante business, either: DARE, which was specifically held up as exemplary in two sections of last fall's crime bill, is competing with other drug-ed programs for a chunk of the more than $500 million the feds put aside for such instruction. And running DARE takes a lot of

JONATHAN NOUROK

money. A DARE spokesperson claims the program costs somewhat less than $200 million annually, but other credible estimates range as high as $700 million, once all costs are considered.

The claims in the government flyer were accurate—to a point. The three-year study, commissioned by the National Institute of Justice, the research office for the U.S. Department of Justice, did include those observations. Researchers found that DARE raises children's self-esteem, polishes their social skills, and improves their attitudes toward police.

But unfortunately for DARE boosters, the study also proved something else: DARE doesn't have a measurable effect on drug abuse. While the flyer devoted ample space to puffery, it dismissed the critical heart of the study in just two terse sentences. And it did not mention that NIJ had refused to publish the study, despite positive peer review.

Charges and countercharges flew throughout the early weeks of October. NIJ was trying to put a positive spin on bad news and suppressing the study, claimed DARE critics. Not so, NIJ Director Jeremy Travis replied in one letter to the editor: Questions about "the scientific validity" of the study were raised by NIJ reviewers, and the work did not meet their "high standards of methodological rigor."

Travis's letter was a stinging rebuke to the prestigious Research Triangle Institute (RTI), which has authored hundreds of government studies without complaint. Under pressure to withdraw the study or rewrite the conclusions, the scientists stood by their work. "We agreed to disagree," says principal author Susan Ennett.

Accusations of faulty research trouble Ennett and her co-authors, who point out that ongoing government reviews examined their work in progress. "We worked with NIJ throughout, sending drafts and getting back comments," says Ennett. "[The review] didn't just happen at the end." Ennett says there were four outside reviews over the lifetime of the three-year project, as well as in-house reviews by NIJ itself.

Another curious aspect of the government reaction is that the RTI study contained no original research. Only previously published studies were examined, and all had reached the same dismal conclusions about DARE. Says Ennett, "The results of all the studies used in the meta-analysis were consistent; it's not like the conclusions of these different studies were all over the place. We did not find any support for [a statistically significant] impact on drug use, and they show DARE has no effect at all on marijuana use." Another author of the study is more blunt: "The kids learn to have respect for police: fine and dandy. But if it's sold for the prevention of drug use, it's not working."

But even if NIJ had signed off on the study, the government had another excuse ready: A new, improved DARE was introduced in the autumn of 1994. And, as the flyer noted, "The effects of the new curriculum on learning and behavior may in turn call for a new evaluation." In the eyes of the Justice Department, in other words, all the research that proves DARE ineffective is now invalid.

This position infuriates many researchers, who view it as a disingenuous attempt to deflect criticism. Claiming that a revised program is entirely new is a well-known academic shell game. "There's not a new curriculum—there's a slightly changed curriculum," argues Richard Clayton, director of the Center of Prevention Research at the University of Kentucky. Clayton, who is now concluding a five-year evaluation of DARE in Kentucky, says his findings also match the conclusions in the RTI study.

"I'm really not surprised NIJ refused to publish it," says Clayton, "but I'm disappointed. DARE has a leadership role to play because it's in half the schools. An organization that receives that much public funding has an obligation to be honest with the public."

In the quiet, scholarly circles of drug-prevention research, the true reasons why NIJ hurried to distance itself will be debated for years. Was there pressure from DARE? "Roberta Silverman doesn't speak for the National Institute of Justice," a spokesperson for NIJ coldly explains. "We can't control DARE America. We don't give them any money. We don't have anything to do with them."

Roberta Silverman is the spokeswoman for DARE America, the nonprofit that provides training for the police officers who teach the curriculum in schools and that also supplies DARE diplomas, hats, umbrellas, pencils, shirts, and other paraphernalia sold to promote the program. Although DARE America had no direct influence on the decision by NIJ, Silverman admits contacting a scientific journal that intended to publish the critical RTI analysis of DARE. "I called *The American Journal of Public Health*. They didn't know the whole study hadn't been released and they didn't know it was taken out of context [of the NIJ report]."

One of the most respected academic journals in its field, *The American Journal of Public Health* accepted the RTI paper after it had been peer reviewed. Sabine Beisler, *Public Health*'s director of publication, told *USA Today* that "DARE has tried to interfere with the publication of this. They tried to intimidate us." Beisler declines further comment, except to confirm that she was accurately quoted, and that the journal received several calls from DARE America.

Despite pressure, *Public Health* published the report in September 1994. *Public Health* Editor Dr. Mervin Susser sees the attempt to interfere with the publication of a scientific paper as misconceived at best, censorious at worst. Susser adds, "The worst of it is, that this study was exceptionally well-reviewed by peers in the field. It's very rare that an article passes so unscratched through review. The uniform appraisal was that it was first rate."

How can *Public Health* reviewers think the work first-rate when NIJ reviewers viewed it as flawed? Roberta Silverman has an idea: "I've asked myself that before. I think [NIJ] had a better understanding of the issues, and it reflects [*Public Health*'s] dispute with NIJ. It was hot and sexy for *Public Health* to criticize DARE."

"[We] decided not to publish it because there were problems with the research," says NIJ spokeswoman Ann Voight. Last fall,

JONATHAN NOUROK

Voight told the *Boston Globe*, "We stand behind the DARE Program as it has evolved. It has made a positive impact on children and law enforcement."

In other instances, DARE supporters have lashed out against those who fault the program. After a 1993 story questioning the effectiveness of DARE appeared in *USA Today*, reporter Dennis Cauchon received letters from classrooms in different parts of the country, all addressed to "Dear DARE-basher," and all using near-identical language.

When a major television network planned a story on the program, DARE America cooperated until it became apparent that the story wasn't going to be a puff piece. "They worked very hard to get our story suppressed," the producer says. After filming a segment about one prominent anti-DARE activist, the producer remembers an angry confrontation with Silverman, who asked why they were "talking to a pro-marijuana supporter."

DARE supporters have lashed out against those who fault the program. After a 1993 story questioning the effectiveness of DARE appeared in USA Today, reporter Dennis Cauchon received letters from classrooms in different parts of the country, all addressed to "Dear DARE-basher," and all using near-identical language.

To tell DARE supporters that you have spoken with program critics often invokes astonishment, like telling Baptists you've been to hell and chatted with Old Nick himself. This us-against-them viewpoint is clearly stated in a November 1994 press release announcing the Substance Abuse Prevention and Law Enforcement Community Partnership Conference. Titled "Pro-Drug Groups Behind Attack on Prevention Programs," the release damns as advocates of drug legalization any who criticize DARE.

"Our detractors like to characterize DARE as an 'Orwellian reality' or 'Big Brother' at work," DARE America Executive Director Glenn Levant is quoted as saying. "These bush-league tactics are transparent for what they are: attempts to support various individual personal agendas at the expense of our children."

But with all that has been written about DARE, few critics have actually been inside a DARE classroom, and few supporters know the origins of the controversial program. Only when you understand both does the true picture emerge. Whether that picture appears "Orwellian" depends on the viewer, but it certainly supports the claim that DARE fails at its basic goal of preventing drug use.

In the DARE Classroom

DARE Officer Terry Campbell is on stage. It is the first time he has visited this fourth-grade class, but most of the children already know him well. As the full-time DARE instructor for Petaluma, California, he has been in the classrooms since 1988. One of the program's recent graduates was Polly Klaas, whose abduction and murder brought sad fame to this small town, 45 minutes north of San Francisco.

After he introduces himself, the 20-minute lesson begins. Campbell asks if anyone knows what DARE means and a girl is quick to respond, "Drug Abuse Resistance Education."

"What's a drug?" Campbell asks. The kids have ready answers, a mix of formal names and common slang. Cocaine. Alcohol. Tobacco. Coke. Pot.

"I know a different kind of drug," a boy adds. "It's a medicine."

Campbell asks, "What is it?"

"Penicillin." The officer asks if his parents ever gave him Children's Tylenol for a headache. Yes, they have.

"Did you take it in the right way?"

"Yes."

"Today, maybe you have a bad headache. Should you take 10 Tylenol?"

"No," the children chorus.

"That's right. That's called drug abuse. That's all a drug is—something that can help you or hurt you, depending on how you take it."

The children listen attentively. Campbell is more than a police officer; he is also a natural teacher, demonstrating a genius that outreaches mere talent. In front of a class, he is transformed, riffing off the kids' questions and comments like Robin Williams, connecting with every child in the room. Hands down, he is one of the best teachers imaginable. DARE and the city of Petaluma are fortunate.

In all classes, time is set aside for questions. Before school, Campbell accurately predicted the first question: "Have you ever shot anybody?" Similar career-day questions follow as the intrigued fourth graders quiz their visiting policeman. His profession is close to their minds; like all DARE officers, Campbell wears his uniform—but sans handgun, walkie-talkie, and other tools of his trade.

These brief kindergarten through fifth-grade classroom visits, Campbell later explains, lay the groundwork for the DARE core curriculum, taught in the sixth grade. Campbell gives safety advice, reminds them to call 911 "if they need to," and prepares them for their DARE sessions. Not insignificantly, he also becomes a familiar and trusted figure. "One of the most beneficial things of the program is that kids get to see police officers like human beings," he says, corroborating a finding of the NIJ-sponsored study.

Next in his schedule is a sixth-grade DARE lesson, where

Campbell teaches the fourth of the 17 lessons in the DARE curriculum. It opens with one of the most controversial elements of the program: the DARE Box. On a window shelf rests the decorated shoebox, where anonymous notes can be passed to Campbell.

Campbell reads the first question: "Someone in my family is doing drugs and I'm worried that if I say anything it will make it worse." Heads spin. Who is it?

"Don't look around," Campbell says quickly. "It isn't important to know who wrote it."

A girl raises her hand. "Maybe that kid wants to talk to you about it."

"I'm more than willing to do that," he smiles warmly. "You all know me." He asks them the consequences of using an illegal drug.

"You could get in trouble," one child says. Another adds, "You could die."

Says Campbell, "It's probably OK to get them into trouble, if that's going to happen."

A boy asks, "What if it's one of your parents?"

"You should talk to a teacher or a counselor, or another adult you trust." As Campbell begins the lesson proper, he slips the note into his pocket.

Of the 27 children in this class, only the boy who apparently asked the question does not immediately open his workbook. Instead, he toys with the paper nameplate sitting on his desk. On the side of the wide triangle facing him are printed the eight ways to say no as taught by DARE. On the opposite side—the side facing Campbell—is the child's name.

What happened to the note? "I threw it away," Campbell says later. "But I didn't put it in the wastebasket in the classroom because one of the kids could find out who wrote it." Campbell was occupied with preparing for the lesson and didn't notice the nervous boy. Still, he says he wouldn't have acted on it if he had. "First, we don't know if they were illegal drugs—it could be alcohol or tobacco. Secondly, I may have a feeling that a child is having problems, but I can't make that assumption. Maybe he was fidgeting because he needed to go to the bathroom."

Several times in the last six years, Campbell has found signed notes in the DARE Box. "If a child wrote that he was being abused or in danger, of course I would follow up on it." Recently, he received a note indicating child abuse. "I got the child appropriate help," says Campbell.

The 14 Percent Solution

"How many of you think people will actually force you to use drugs?" Campbell asks, bringing Maggie, one of the girls in the class, to the front of the room. (The names of the children have been changed.) "It's possible that somebody's gonna hold a gun to your head and say, take these drugs. More common is the form that Maggie and I have been best friends since kindergarten and I say, 'Hey, Maggie, I got some marijuana here and I think it's really great'..."

"NO!" the child interrupts loudly, with a self-conscious giggle.

"...Would you like to try it?"

"NO!"

"Come on, we won't be best friends if you don't."

"NO!"

It is the introduction to a lesson on peer pressure and leads into a discussion of how friends can subtly coax agreement. Campbell reads from the DARE workbook: "How many seventh-grade students out of 100 have been drunk from any alcoholic beverage?" The children, organized into groups of five and six, are to come up with a collective answer.

More than a little confusion spreads through the classroom about the assignment. The workbook explains this is the result of a "recent national survey," but many don't understand what that means. Does it include New York? one child asks. San Jose? A couple of minutes pass as the children struggle to understand what they are asked to do.

As the groups debate, Campbell wanders through the room, eavesdropping. Just as he approaches, one of the groups settles on 17.5 percent. A girl writes the number in her workbook as Campbell peers over her shoulder. She looks to him for approval but he says nothing, and his face remains blank. As he moves to the next group, she turns to classmates: "Let's go a little bit higher; he didn't seem to like that."

The five groups come to five different solutions, ranging between 42 percent and 70 percent. Campbell smiles; the exercise has worked. The correct answer, he reveals, is 14 percent. He points to the group that first had a 17.5 percent answer. He overheard one boy vote for 15 percent but relent against the collective will of the group. "This demonstrates how peer pressure works," Campbell says. "We allowed our peers to talk us into it. Is everybody out there doing drugs?"

The class chimes no, in unison.

"Just because somebody does it doesn't mean everybody does. Did I surprise you that the figure was so low?" Campbell asks.

"No," the class responds again, but weaker.

Unfortunately, the 14 percent statistic used in the lesson is incorrect. And it's not even from a recent nationwide survey—the number comes from research done between 1989 and 1990 in California alone. The survey is done every two years for the state attorney general, and the most recent figure for seventh graders who have ever been intoxicated is 23 percent.

Even though DARE's statistic is wrong, it is still lower than any of the estimates by the children. The objective of the lesson is valid; childhood perceptions of normal behavior can be badly skewed.

More troublesome is the lesson design. Only a wrong answer is "right"; the lesson fails if the class picks accurate numbers. When one group chose 17.5 percent, Campbell—probably unconsciously—led them to raise their guesstimate by implying disapproval. Such subtle problems with design can give even brilliant teachers like Campbell fits.

Shown a transcript of this session, researchers not associated with DARE agree that the point of the lesson was valuable but dismiss the DARE exercise as useless. "Kids don't relate to na-

tional or state data," says Joel Moskowitz, who has authored evaluations of several drug education programs. "It's what their friends are doing that counts."

Moskowitz and others were also critical of the role-playing between Campbell and Maggie. "It should have been between two adolescents," Moskowitz says. "She just parroted the lines the police officer expected. It's not going to be so easy to say no to a friend if it's going to make them your enemy."

As the primary author of the DARE curriculum, Dr. Ruth Rich responds to their criticism. "The problem with this lesson is that the kids don't understand the math," she says. Not so, at least in Petaluma. The children in this class actually skidded to a halt over the concept of a nationwide survey. The same confusion was repeated in another sixth-grade class, later in the day. If the point of the lesson is to teach kids that not everyone does drugs and "that concept is not being taught, we need to work on it," Rich concedes.

What about the complaint that a peer should have played the role of the friend offering Maggie drugs? Says Rich, "We have the officers role-play with the youngsters. We try to get the situation as real as possible, but we would never have a child offering a joint—it reinforces the negative."

Birth of a Notion

The problems with this lesson demonstrate something else as well: Designing an effective anti-drug program ain't easy.

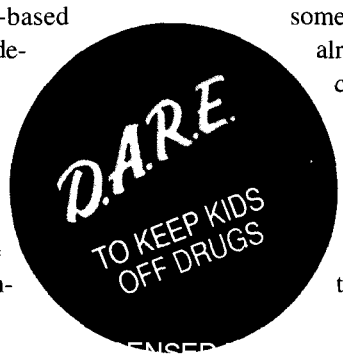
When Maggie role-plays saying no to Officer Campbell, she reinforces her skills at turning down drugs from a uniformed policeman. Not a likely real-life scenario. But if Maggie rejects a reefer from classmate Tommy, Maggie has a more realistic experience—and Tommy gets some practice in pushing drugs.

Similarly, it's important for kids to know that drug abuse is the exception rather than the norm. Is there a better solution than the troublesome "national survey" question?

"They borrowed that from SMART," says veteran researcher Bill Hansen. "We moved well beyond that, but it took us years to find out how to best get the information across to kids."

Started in 1981, Project SMART (short for Self-Management and Resistance Training) was one of the pioneer anti-drug school programs, preceding even Nancy Reagan's plea to "Just say no." Hansen was one of the researchers hired by the University of Southern California to develop SMART. To test their theories, they used the mammoth Los Angeles Unified School District.

By all accounts, those were heady times for the scientists. With over 20,000 middle-school students available, L.A. Unified was a living laboratory. At weekly meetings, then–L.A. Unified health education specialist and eventual DARE curriculum author Ruth Rich provided classroom-based feedback to the team of USC researchers developing the program.



USC was testing two completely different versions of the SMART curriculum. Bill Hansen explains: "One was 'affective.' It focused on self-esteem and setting goals. The other was 'resistance training,' which concentrated on social influences, such as [cigarette and alcohol] ads."

But while Project SMART was still in its toddling stages, another player joined the game: then–Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates. "In 1983, Daryl Gates came on board," Rich says. "They had just had another high school drug bust, and he said he'd rather deploy his resources for prevention, that they were going to be coming into the schools."

Fortunately, a promising new drug-prevention program was at hand: Project SMART. Rich approached Andy Johnson, leader of the USC research team, with the idea of sharing SMART with the cops. "They [police] were going to be coming into the schools," says Rich. "I asked Andy if we could work with him and he said, no, he had problems with [police in the classroom], so we took SMART and used that."

Though sympathetic to Rich's dilemma, Johnson says he had serious objections to handing an experimental educational program over to the local police. He worried that police might have credibility problems with sophisticated, urban Los Angeles seventh graders.

Another concern was unrelated to drug education: He wanted the police version of SMART confined to L.A. Unified—the program was copyrighted by USC. "There was discussion about copyright concerns, but Ruth said they had made changes [to the curriculum]. I made the decision to let it go, not pursue the issue. We never thought it would become an international movement and DARE would take on a life of its own."

Rich says they asked permission to use the SMART curriculum, and, for her new program, boldly combined the affective and resistance-training models. She also incorporated police officers to teach the material. Did Gates try to dictate what would be taught? No, Rich insists: "There was pressure that we had to provide a program, but [Gates] didn't tell us what had to be in it."

DARE premiered later in 1983, piloted in 50 schools with 10 police officers. Rich heeded Andy Johnson's advice about grade level. The new DARE program was taught in fifth and sixth grades instead of seventh.

This slide to a younger age leads DARE critics to suggest that the program is developmentally inappropriate, that the material is better suited for older children. Several reviewers who read the "national survey" transcript commented that it revealed that the children weren't ready for this type of material.

As DARE was going forth and multiplying in L.A. Unified schools, the USC team continued its research. They discovered an important difference between the two versions of the SMART curriculum: The affective program didn't work. Not only that, it had the dreaded "boomerang" effect—it actually encouraged some children to fiddle with drugs. Yet the school district had already adopted the affective program as part of the new DARE curriculum.

"L.A. Unified grew distant," recalls Hansen. "Which cut them off from our research of the two programs, the one that worked and one that didn't. They just put the two together. What they took was the prototype; we went through 30 versions of the curriculum, so a lot of the stuff they lifted was antiquated, in our view."

Andy Johnson also sees DARE as reflecting the "antiquated" SMART prototype, and remembers offering to help fix it. "We talked to them about evaluating it, but DARE was never interested," he says. Johnson recalls there was an "anti-intellectual attitude" among the new leadership elbowing their way into the program. But to Gates and others, DARE didn't need fixing; what it needed was money, and friends in high places.

Spreading the Gospel

By the autumn of 1985, DARE was entrenched in the Los Angeles schools. That by itself was good news in the "Just Say No" years; most of the other drug-prevention programs in use around the country were small-scale projects, untested outside of a handful of classrooms. And worse, many of those programs were found to have little or no effect on drug use when evaluated. Some even had the boomerang effect, like the prototypes of Project SMART. There was just one problem with DARE: It hadn't been independently evaluated at all.

As DARE was multiplying in L.A. schools, the USC team continued its research. They discovered the "affective" program didn't work. Not only that, it had the dreaded "boomerang" effect—it actually encouraged some children to fiddle with drugs. Yet the school district had already adopted the affective program as part of the new DARE curriculum.

To find out how well it worked, the National Institute of Justice sent consultant William DeJong to California. "I wrote the first published study of DARE [in 1986], and it showed that there were positive results," says DeJong. "Based on my study, NIJ decided to devote money to DARE." Another reason NIJ went ahead, according to DeJong, was that DARE was based on Project SMART. Then in its fifth year, the government-funded SMART had refined its program several generations beyond the prototype adapted by DARE.

With the stamp of NIJ approval, Gates won a $140,000 grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, a part of the Department of Justice, to take DARE nationwide. DeJong continued to be involved, authoring the DARE implementation manual for BJA.

While $140,000 might be enough to fund a hometown anti-drug program, DARE needed far more to go national. The solution came from Congress in the form of the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986. Buried in the small print was an entitlement for at least 10 percent of the state grants to governors to go only to programs that included "classroom instruction by uniformed law enforcement officials." A host of other criteria were listed that were met only by programs "such as Project Drug Abuse Resistance Education." By 1992, their share of the federal pie came to almost $10 million.

To manage the growing DARE movement and help spread the gospel, the nonprofit corporation DARE America was formed in 1987. More grants from BJA soon followed, which allowed DARE America to establish regional training centers throughout the United States. DARE was fast becoming America's de facto drug-education program.

The 1986 entitlement helped fuel DARE's explosive growth, but it by no means paid all the bills. Most funding came from the army of fervent DARE supporters in the community, eager to find an easy solution to the problem of juvenile drug abuse. DARE became "a rallying symbol to do something positive about the drug abuse problem," as one state director of DARE told Congress in 1990.

Once again, Petaluma, California is probably typical. It costs the city over $100,000 each year to pay the salaries for Officer Campbell and a part-time reserve officer and to supply DARE workbooks and awards to approximately 800 children. (Graduates are given free DARE T-shirts, pencils, rulers, and a diploma.) Civic-minded real-estate developers have supplied most of these funds since 1990, and individuals in the community also make donations. But the contractors' tithe ends this year; what will the city do?

Probably look to Uncle Sam. The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act—now called the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994—includes more than $400 million dollars for DARE and other programs. Gone is the $10 million entitlement; now DARE competes with other programs for its piece of the federal action. But of the 14 activities listed in the bill, most are vague: "Before- and after-school activities" is a typical description. And not only is DARE mentioned by name, it is specified twice, in different parts of the act. (The only other specific program mentioned is "Project Legal Lives," a program for district attorneys to conduct mock trials.)

And it's not difficult to predict how a city like Petaluma will spend its drug-education dollars. DARE has enormous grassroots support; the kids like it; the parents and teachers like it; and perhaps most of all, the local police like it. Any program with such grassroots support wields considerable clout on Capitol Hill; when the Clinton administration recommended eliminating drug-education entitlements in March 1994, the House killed the motion, 418 to 1.

DARE also appears twice in the crime bill, where it will wrestle all comers for $284 million by 1996, rising to $375 million by the end of the decade. Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), chair of the Judiciary Committee, takes credit for the inclusion. "As you know, it's a pretty popular program, so it wasn't a question of not including it," says a Biden staffer.

How much does DARE cost nationally? Several newspapers have claimed $700 million annually, close to the appropriation for the entire Drug Enforcement Administration. DARE America spokesperson Silverman sees the $700 million statistic as sloppy journalism. "In 1992, we estimated the value of officer services at $153 million. Actual cash for DARE America was $1.5 million. I don't know where they got $700 million."

But according to *USA Today* reporter Dennis Cauchon, the estimate comes from her boss, DARE America Executive Director Glenn Levant. "Levant and I went over all the numbers," Cauchon says. "Including every cent in private donations. It includes all money actually spent on DARE every year."

there was a significant negative impact on the DARE girls—the boomerang effect.

In 1991, NIJ decided to settle the question of DARE's worth by hiring analysts at Research Triangle Institute (RTI) to do a comprehensive evaluation. To DARE, it seemed like vindication and due respect was finally at hand. "The review of the DARE evaluation literature will give us ammunition to respond to critics who charge that DARE has not proved its effectiveness," read a DARE letter sent to state coordinators.

RTI researchers, of course, found no new ammunition for DARE in the studies. Yes, the program improved the relationship between schoolchildren and the police, and taught the kids many

By 1991, there were more than a dozen studies that claimed DARE didn't work at all. Not that it was useless: It had positive effects on children's knowledge about drugs, helped develop their social skills, and improved their attitude about police. But all these studies said the same thing about drug use—if DARE had any effect at all, it was short lived.

All told, local DARE programs are eligible for a direct share of more than half a billion federal dollars annually, still short of the $700 million total in operating costs. As in Petaluma, the difference will be made up by civic groups, individuals, and local government. School districts that are strapped to buy textbooks pitch in, as do cities and counties teetering on bankruptcy. In Petaluma, DARE Officer Terry Campbell tells a story: "At the end of the school year, the teacher asked the kids what they wanted to do with the leftover class treasury. She told them they could have a pizza party, whatever they wanted. The kids said they wanted to give the money to DARE." With such enthusiasm for the program, it almost begs the question: What if it doesn't work?

The Emperor's Clothing

DARE keeps children away from drugs. That *raison d'être* sold thousands of communities on the program and keeps DARE in the schools, even if budget cuts must be made somewhere else. But by 1991, there were more than a dozen studies that claimed DARE didn't work at all. Not that it was useless: It had positive effects on children's knowledge about drugs, helped develop their social skills, and improved their attitude about police. But all these studies said the same thing about drug use—if DARE had any effect at all, it was short lived.

Except, of course, for one study: the 1986 evaluation by William DeJong, used by NIJ to start the DARE bandwagon rolling. When DeJong's research appeared in the *Journal of Drug Education*, his colleagues called the design of his study "seriously flawed." Among their complaints was that the children were given no test before starting the DARE program, which made it impossible to evaluate any claims of improvement. Critics also noted that the study revealed positive effects only with boys; useful things. But as far as stopping them from using drugs... sorry.

A preliminary version of the RTI report was released at a 1993 San Diego conference, which devoted an entire day to DARE. After listening to the presentations, DARE America's Glenn Levant dismissed the criticism out of hand. He said, "The only way that I know that you can determine if DARE is effective is through a long-term, seven-year-plus longitudinal national evaluation." The studies discussed, Levant argued, were merely "a bunch of $200,000 and $300,000 superficial evaluations" that were not conclusive. A valid criticism, perhaps, but these were the same "superficial evaluations" that DARE was prepared to accept for vindication.

A former Los Angeles deputy police chief, Levant added that few children were arrested for looting during the 1992 L.A. riots. Drug-dealing was also down in the schools, he said. "Why? Because the officers, undercover, on campus, are talking to kids about where they get drugs on campus. They're getting the DARE message from high school kids. So does DARE work? You're darned right it does."

Levant's remarks about "officers, undercover, on campus" reflect the original justification used by Gates: Get police into the schools to arrest drug dealers. While it may serve the laudable goal of keeping drugs out of the schoolyard, covert evidence-gathering police work is not one of the stated objectives of DARE.

These comments also typify DARE America's response to criticism. A 1993 Gallup poll of recent DARE graduates is frequently cited by Levant to demonstrate the program's worth, as is a survey of enthusiastic school administrators. But surveys and anecdotes are far different from rigorous scientific evaluation. If these same policemen obtained evidence of a crime, would they

want professional technicians to analyze it or would they ask Gallup to quiz the public?

Project SMART researcher Bill Hansen was surprised by DARE's attitude toward researchers in San Diego. "It created a firestorm. Before that, they had never talked to a scientist; they didn't consider discussing the curriculum relevant to what they were doing."

After San Diego, DARE America created a nine-member "Scientific Advisory Board" for the first time. The board has recommended that a "learning lab" be created for testing of the curriculum, but DARE America has not taken their advice.

A new curriculum was first mentioned at the conference, where Hansen and others learned that DARE was planning the first major changes in 10 years. To Hansen, this announcement presented an amusing contradiction: "They basically said at San Diego, 'Our program doesn't have a problem—and don't worry, we're fixing it.'"

Spin Control

The new version of DARE hit the schools in the fall of 1994. The program now includes lessons on gang violence and added emphasis is given to the evils of tobacco.

Perhaps uncoincidentally, the new emphasis on violence and cigarettes also matches new criteria for funding. *Violence* is a key word in the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, and similar wording can be found in the federal crime bill. States such as California and Massachusetts also have hefty set-asides for anti-tobacco programs, funded by cigarette taxes. The new, improved description of DARE seems almost custom-designed for these new requirements.

Also, says author Ruth Rich, "the new curriculum is 70 percent more interactive than the old. Now there's no place [in the program] where we don't have the child involved."

This change appears to be a positive one. "Interactive" means the child is an active participant, as opposed to quietly listening to a lecture by the DARE instructor. Although all researchers shown the transcript of the "national survey" question faulted the merits of the lesson, they all approved of the way DARE had the children discuss it in small groups.

Despite the revamped curriculum, controversy ensued as DARE America tried to influence *The American Journal of Public Health* and NIJ released the good news–only flyer. Spokespersons from NIJ insist that DARE America did not influence their decision to tone down the negative aspects of the research, claiming instead that their independent reviewers had recommended that approach. Who were these reviewers, and how "independent" were they? NIJ declines to reveal their identities. "It's always been our policy to keep the names private, so there won't be pressure," says a NIJ spokeswoman. "We feel strongly about the independence of our evaluators."

But DARE America readily supplies the name of one of the reviewers: William DeJong. The same man whose early, positive critique was so pivotal in rooting DARE in our schools.

Says DeJong, "RTI should have said, 'Here's what we did. It's the best we can do with [our analysis], but not too much should be made of this because there's a new curriculum.' They should have kept it in perspective."

Now a lecturer at Harvard, DeJong says he hoped "RTI would back away from its strong anti-DARE conclusion." DeJong particularly objects to comparing DARE to programs that showed better results but were university-based and required intensive training or a difficult-to-sustain level of resources. "It's like comparing a nurtured hothouse flower to a national program."

DeJong's comment brings to mind a fundamental complaint made by critics: DARE is fast becoming a government-sanctioned monopoly. DARE is now in 8,000 communities and more than 50 percent of our schools. Six million children will receive DARE instruction this year, and another 19 million will have classroom visits from their local DARE officer. DARE has grown like the kudzu vine, blanketing the country and smothering competing "hothouse" drug-prevention projects. For instance, both Andy Johnson and Bill Hansen have developed drug-education programs since the days of Project SMART, but compared to the enormous numbers of kids receiving DARE, these are little more than humble science-fair projects.

And without research, we won't know what—if anything—will prevent kids from abusing drugs. This is the dismal news about drug education: All programs are qualified failures, providing only small gains that soon disappear. For all the tinkering over the years, Project SMART has achieved only modest reductions in drug abuse, primarily by postponing the age at which a child begins to experiment with cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs.

Asked if the new version of DARE was tested before it was introduced into classrooms nationwide, DARE America spokeswoman Roberta Silverman says there were pilot tests, but "we only did a limited evaluation of the new curriculum—just a checks-and-balances kind of thing about the pilot testing."

The new DARE curriculum might be better than the old. Although highly unlikely, it is also possible that it could be worse, more likely to produce a boomerang effect. Without evaluations, we don't know. Are there at least plans to put the new program under a microscope? "We don't have any research lined up, but we're seeking government funding to do a longitudinal study," says Silverman.

Even if started today, a five-year longitudinal study would be completed in the year 2000, just as the children of the first DARE graduates will be introduced to their DARE officer in kindergarten. By 2000, DARE will likely be in all our schools, and all those "hothouse" programs will have become academic footnotes. And doubtless all of the parents, teachers, administrators, and police departments will still embrace the painless, easy solutions that DARE offers, happy that at least they're doing something positive to stop the scourge of drug abuse by children. ®

Jeff Elliott is a freelance journalist who writes most frequently about science, environmental issues, and technology.

BACKGROUND CHECK

People to watch in the new Congress
By Rick Henderson

On November 9, Bill Clinton became a domestic-policy lame duck. Since then, all of the energy and initiative for changes in taxes, spending, and regulation have originated on Capitol Hill. Even the White House's "Middle Class Bill of Rights" was upstaged by Hill Democrats when incoming Minority Leader Dick Gephardt proposed his own middle-class tax cut three days before Clinton unveiled his plan.

The November election was both a rejection of the high-handed ways in which Democrats have controlled the legislative branch and a call for a less-intrusive federal government. The House Republicans, led by Speaker Newt Gingrich, have already implemented long-overdue changes in the ways Congress

HENRY PAYNE

operates—eliminating committees, requiring members to be present at committee meetings to cast votes, and forcing Congress to abide by the laws under which businesses operate.

But the November elections cannot be considered truly revolutionary unless Congress does more than keep its own houses in order. If the GOP is serious about rolling back the federal government, it must tackle arcane budget rules, the tax code, and regulations. And it must overcome powerful advocates for statism both inside and outside the Republican party.

The mainstream press may have conferred near omnipotence on Gingrich. But his voice won't be the only one heard on Capitol Hill. Senators and other representatives will serve up ideas that Congress will tackle, including some the speaker doesn't like. Here are a few bellwethers worth watching:

The Innovators

The Republicans' new congressional majority is a tribute to the power of ideas as party-building political tools. And as House Majority Leader Dick Armey proved with his base-closing commission, clever policy making can be a great way to build an individual career. The need for new ideas will continue once the 100 days of the Contract with America have come and gone. Expect the Republicans to look to these innovators for both policy and packaging to define the post-Contract Congress.

Rep. Chris Cox (R-Calif.)

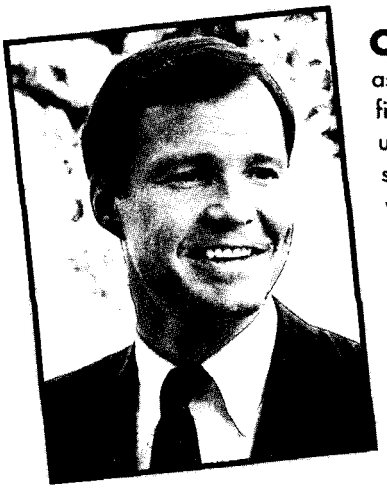
The Orange County congressman floated his first initiative for the new Congress on election night: The Republicans might, he said, reorganize the House committee structure to reflect an antistatist agenda, starting with committees on revision and repeal and on privatization and deregulation. Following Gingrich's operating procedure, Cox announced the possible reorganization first to the public, via TV appearances and newspaper interviews.

Such fundamental restructuring was too hot for Newt's revolutionaries. But the trial balloon marked Cox as an idea man in the new Congress, getting him favorable coverage from George Will and other columnists. And it reminded the Republican majority not to fall in love with passing laws—that their self-proclaimed agenda is to roll back government, not to expand it in new directions.

A member of the counsel's staff in the Reagan White House, the 42-year-old Cox is best known to Congress watchers for his work on budget reform. In 1989 he cooked up a plan to impose discipline on congressional appropriations and control the automatic escalation of even "discretionary" federal spending.

The articulate Newport Beach representative proposed switching to a one-page budget specifying how much could be spent in each of the 19 categories that make up the federal budget. If Congress went over the specified limits, the president could rescind the additional spending. The Cox plan also would have frozen each agency's budget at the previous year's level unless Congress specifically increased the budget, thereby doing away with "baseline budgeting."

Cox is the second-ranking Republican on the Budget Committee, after Chairman John Kasich of Ohio. Before the election, Republicans disgruntled with Kasich's compromise on the crime bill and suspicious that Kasich might be too friendly to Democratic tax-raising schemes had hinted they might hand a future chairmanship to Cox. The threat apparently worked; in the weeks leading up to the election, Kasich became one of the most important spokesmen for the fiscal provisions of the Republican Contract.



JOHN EISELE

Cox is a critic of using taxes as a tool of behavior modification, and he may end up refereeing the coming struggle between Republicans who want to make the tax code simple and Republicans who want to lard it with credits and deductions designed to entice Americans to behave in a more conservative-approved manner.

And Cox instead landed a leadership position as the new chairman of the Republican Policy Committee, the House's internal think tank. There, among other issues, Cox will gauge public support for the two Republican plans to simplify taxes: Armey's proposed 17-percent flat tax and incoming Ways and Means Chairman Bill Archer's plan to abolish the Internal Revenue Service and replace the income tax with a national sales tax. Cox is a critic of using taxes as a tool of behavior modification, and he may end up refereeing the coming struggle between Republicans who want to make the tax code simple and Republicans who want to lard it with credits and deductions designed to entice Americans to behave in a more conservative-approved manner.

Cox, whose Harvard law degree came along with an MBA, can also expect to play a major role in calming the calls for regulation that accompany each rediscovery that securities markets entail risk. The former securities lawyer was in the headlines when Orange County declared bankruptcy in December. In fact, he broke the story when he was handed a note from the county's lobbyist during a meeting with reporters. The note read: "Urgent: Orange County may declare bankruptcy by 1:30 this afternoon. Please call the SEC to get the federal courts to freeze the asset pool" to stop investors from pulling their money out. Cox read the first sentence aloud—he later said he assumed the news was already public—and thereby precluded any behind-the-scenes federal intervention.

As the GOP's point man on financial markets and an Orange County representative, Cox would be the logical person to head any congressional inquiry into the bankruptcy. That means the county's financial shenanigans are unlikely to spark a witchhunt against derivatives or other esoteric securities.

As part of the Contract with America, Cox is principal sponsor of the Securities Litigation Reform Act, a bill that would make it more difficult for investors to file class-action lawsuits

against the companies they invest in or the brokerage houses from which they take advice. Cox's bill would require an investor to hold at least a 1-percent stake in a security before filing suit; force plaintiffs to prove brokerages intentionally lied rather than merely gave bad investment advice; and make investors who lost lawsuits pay the defendants' legal fees. Nuisance suits when stock prices fall are pet peeves of growth companies in particular, including the high-tech communities in both Orange County and Silicon Valley.

Both regions could prove critical to Cox's longer-term ambitions. He had considered challenging Dianne Feinstein for the Senate last year. Given the Republican year, he might very well have won the general election. When Michael Huffington promised to spend millions to win the Republican primary, however, Cox decided to hold on to his House seat. Many observers believe Cox will challenge Barbara Boxer for California's other Senate seat in 1998.

Rep. Bill Zeliff (R-N.H.)

The 1994 elections may have marked a turning point in the public perception of the pork-barrel programs that concentrate benefits in one congressional district. Skepticism of such targeted government programs helped sound the death-knell for those legislators, notably House Speaker Tom Foley, who viewed government as a patronage machine or a way to bribe voters. And

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few issues underscored the ossified nature of Democrats in the 103rd Congress more than their leaders' response to the A-to-Z spending-cut plan.

A-to-Z was a clever policy idea with a career-building name. It took its title from the distinctive last initial of its originator, Bill Zeliff, an affable 58-year-old from New Hampshire's north country. He went looking for a co-sponsor whose surname would complete the alphabetical spectrum and signed on Rob Andrews, a then-freshman Democrat from New Jersey.

Much like Armey's base-closing commission, which listed a group of bases that would either all continue operating or would all close, the A-to-Z program offered an ingenious method of circumventing the pork barrel. The A-to-Z plan would set aside a segment of the legislative calendar in which any member of Congress could propose cuts in any federal program or cluster of programs. The entire House would then cast an up-or-down vote on each proposal.

When the Democrat leaders refused to hold hearings on A-to-Z, and shut it out of the legislative calendar, Zeliff and Andrews responded by circulating a discharge petition for the plan. If a majority of the members of the House sign a discharge petition for a certain bill, that bill must be brought to the floor for a vote without amendments. Though A-to-Z had more than 220 co-sponsors, Speaker Tom Foley and Majority Leader Gephardt were able to threaten and cajole a handful of co-sponsors and prevent them from signing the discharge petition.

The result was a tactical win for the big spenders but a strategic loss. The A-to-Z plan became a populist touchstone, fodder for countless talk radio hosts. Zeliff will reintroduce A-to-Z in the 104th Congress, where it should get a friendlier reception.

An innkeeper whose pro-choice position led the conservative *Manchester Union Leader* to endorse his opponents in the 1992 primary and general elections, Zeliff's next target will probably be regulations, especially those that affect entrepreneurs. In December, he founded the Small Business Survival Caucus, a group of legislators that will work to reduce the size of the federal government by cutting taxes, spending, and regulations.

And if the new Congress changes the Superfund law, Zeliff will be one of the architects. The current law makes every polluter at a Superfund site potentially responsible for paying the entire cleanup costs, even if that company's actions were legal before Superfund was enacted. In the last Congress, Zeliff and another New Hampshire Republican, Sen. Bob Smith, co-sponsored an amendment that would have repealed the retroactive-liability provisions in the Superfund law and paid for cleanups by doubling the Superfund tax rates. Zeliff plans to reintroduce this bill in the new Congress.

The Democrats

For the Democrats, the 104th Congress represents every coach's nightmare—the rebuilding year. With a dramatically different and smaller team, Democrats have to figure out just what style of ball to play: suburban or inner city.

The suburbanites are corporatists who sag to the center, fighting broad-based tax cuts in the name of fiscal responsibility, favoring targeted credits and deductions, and supporting freer trade. The inner-city representatives, meanwhile, play a rhetorically rougher game, applying in-your-face pressure out on the fringe. They will continue to fight for income redistribution, race-based regulations, and urban pork.

Allies on many issues, both Democratic factions speak the language of business success, economic empowerment, and jobs. And both camps have politically savvy, outspoken representatives from California.

Rep. Robert Matsui (D-Calif.)

Despite Bill Clinton's weakened position, the president can still veto bills he doesn't like and will need friends on Capitol Hill to advance his administration's agenda. Had the Democrats retained control of Congress, Sacramento native Bob Matsui might have supplanted New York's Charles Rangel and become chairman of

BRUCE REEDY

the Ways and Means Committee. (Democratic leaders did not want two New Yorkers, Rangel and Senate Finance Committee

Matsui has supported the use of the tax code for social-engineering endeavors—targeted capital-gains cuts, limits on employer-provided parking to encourage using mass transit, and tax credits for child care and wind power. He supported the administration's stimulus package and the 1993 budget deal.

Chairman Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in charge of the tax-writing committees.) Now that Democrats are in the minority, Matsui, an ideological ally of Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, may instead become the Clinton administration's biggest booster on Capitol Hill.

The White House chose the telegenic 53-year-old Matsui, rather than more-senior trade subcommittee members (the 74-year-old Sam Gibbons and the legally challenged Dan Rostenkowski), as its principal House spokesman for the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. But taxes and spending, rather than trade, will dominate the new Congress. Matsui was an early supporter of the rate-cutting tax simplifications in the 1986 reforms. More recently, however, he has become a "Panetta Democrat"—a corporatist deficit hawk who believes in using the Internal Revenue Code to supplement government activism.

Over the past few years, Matsui has supported the use of the tax code for a variety of social-engineering endeavors—targeted capital-gains cuts, limits on employer-provided parking to encourage the use of mass transit, and tax credits for child care and wind power. He supported the administration's stimulus package and the 1993 budget deal.

Since the election, he has become a vocal critic of the Contract with America and one of the few legislators to oppose any tax cuts, including Gephardt's and Clinton's. Matsui argues that the 1981 income-tax rate cuts expanded the federal deficit and ballooned the national debt; he says a similar tax-cut bidding war today would cause the deficit to explode. In fact, the deficit was driven up by the military buildup and by spending increases in the types of programs Matsui supports—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, and other government intrusions in the marketplace such as job training and industrial policy.

Matsui's opposition to tax cuts may appear impolitic now. But it may eventually be echoed by Clinton, as spending advocates bombard the White House with demands for more money. Expect to hear the phrase Matsui now uses, "We can't enact any tax cuts we can't pay for," become a part of the administration's playbook in the coming months.

RICHARD A. BLOOM

Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.)

As a member of the California Assembly, Waters was a protégé of Speaker Willie Brown, the most powerful and most feared politician in state government. She came to Washington in 1990 and quickly became the most prominent freshman in the House.

Outside her South-Central Los Angeles district, people have heard of Waters mostly as a result of two events: the 1992 Los Angeles riots and the House Whitewater hearings. In the aftermath of the riots, she blanketed television and radio talk shows as an apologist for gang violence, actions that have prompted Michael Barone, co-author of *The Almanac of American Politics*, to say Waters "speaks in the authentic accents of the street thug." As a member of the House Banking Committee, she also drew national attention during the Whitewater hearings when she repeatedly shouted, "Shut up," at Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) as he tried to question Clinton administration witnesses.

Despite her blustery demeanor, the 56-year-old Waters is more than sharp elbows and left-wing dogma. She supports programs to deter teen pregnancies and, unlike many inner-city legislators, plans to be more than a naysayer in the welfare-reform debate. In the state legislature, Waters was an important backer of the Greater Avenues for Independence program, better known as GAIN, which establishes work requirements for some welfare recipients. A former garment worker who earned a sociology degree when she was 32, Waters supports job-training programs that replace cash welfare grants with scholarship-like stipends to people who complete adult-education programs.

But Republicans promise to more than tinker with existing programs. The debate has now shifted beyond funding levels for food stamps to questions over what role, if any, Washington should play in anti-poverty programs. Republicans are now proposing giving states money to administer any programs they choose and otherwise getting out of their way. Waters will remain relevant in this debate only if Republicans fail to substantively slash welfare bureaucracies.

People have heard of Waters mostly as a result the 1992 Los Angeles riots and the Whitewater hearings. After the riots, she blanketed television and radio as an apologist for gang violence. During the Whitewater hearings she repeatedly shouted, "Shut up," at Rep. Peter King as he tried to question Clinton administration witnesses.

Waters is also a savvy politician. Previously a Jesse Jackson supporter, she endorsed Bill Clinton early in the 1992 campaign and co-chaired his California effort. She then distanced herself from him after he won the Democratic nomination, though not too far; her political support won her husband a post as ambassa-

dor to the Bahamas. And while Rep. Kweisi Mfume (D-Md.) seethed at Republicans for cutting off taxpayer funds for the Congressional Black Caucus last December, Waters brushed the matter aside. "We are, I think, wise enough and capable of raising the money necessary to keep this organization going and I think that's what we're going to have to do," she told the *Los Angeles Times*.

The money will presumably come from shaking down corporate donors. And Waters's seat on the Banking Committee could help provide her with access to guilt money from businesses. Look for her to relentlessly prod companies to confront two issues: economic devastation in the inner city and bank-lending practices that allegedly discriminate against women and members of racial minority groups.

The Western Senators

The new Republican majorities are dominated by members from the South and the West, and for good reason: Americans have been moving West for almost 300 years and South for at least 30. The GOP must sweep both regions to retake the White House next year.

With their anti–welfare state positions, economic optimism, and morality-infused rhetoric, House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senate Majority Whip Trent Lott represent the spirit of the suburban South, a combination of upward mobility and conservative Christianity. Western attitudes are slightly different: less genteel, more get-out-of-my-face. In both regions, however, voters are energized by issues that the Eastern establishment considers outside the bounds of civilized discourse, including the rights of property and gun owners. And beyond the leadership, the West is just as important—particularly in the Senate, where population density doesn't matter.

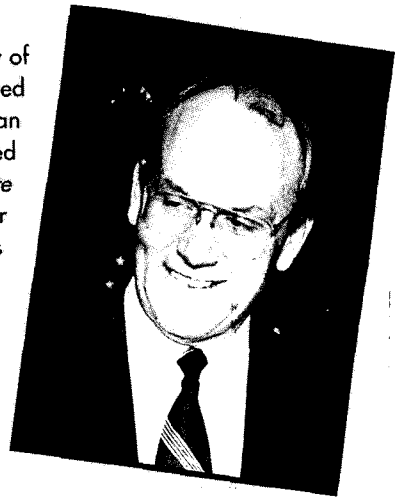
Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho)

Larry Craig, elected to the House in 1980 and the Senate a decade later, has been an early advocate of fiscal and regulatory reforms that later resonated nationally. During the 1980s, Craig relentlessly campaigned for a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution. If Congress indeed passes an amendment this spring, the 49-year-old Craig may spend much of the next few years traveling to state capitals, lobbying legislatures to ratify it. That alone would make him a national figure.

He has a major obstacle to overcome first, however: getting the same amendment through both houses of Congress. A balanced-budget amendment runs the risk of becoming an excuse for raising taxes, rather than a mechanism for reducing spending. To counteract that effect, House Republicans promise to offer a version of the amendment that would require a 60-percent majority vote to increase taxes. Craig says that fewer than 67 senators would support such an amendment and that even debating the idea would waste time.

But if he and Senate Republicans insist on an amendment free of tax limitations, they could lose House support. And a balanced-budget-amendment-at-any-cost strategy that threatens to saddle taxpayers with ever-escalating bills could make the amendment harder to get through state legislatures, and far less effective at limiting the size of government.

When not plumping for the balanced-budget amendment, Craig is a leading advocate of regulatory reforms that appeal to grassroots voters in the West and beyond. The farmer and rancher replaced his former Idaho colleague Steve Symms as co-chairman of the Senate Property Rights caucus, which works to repeal intrusive government regulations or to enact laws that protect property owners from those restrictions. He is a principal cosponsor of Sen. Phil Gramm's Private Property Restoration Act, a bill that would mandate compensation to a land owner when any new government regulation reduces the value of his property by 25 percent or $10,000, whichever is less.



Craig's advocacy of property rights has attracted national attention. In an article on the Endangered Species Act, *Charlotte Observer* reporter Heather Dewar quoted Craig's opinion that the act allows "malicious bureaucrats" to engage in "environmental extremism that has ruined the lives of ordinary people."

Craig's vigorous advocacy of property rights has attracted national attention, making him the senator to call on the issue—even for journalists far from his Western home. In a December 25 article on the Endangered Species Act, *Charlotte Observer* reporter Heather Dewar quoted Craig's opinion that the act allows "malicious bureaucrats" to engage in "environmental extremism that has ruined the lives of ordinary people."

Most recently, Craig has cheered gun owners and more-traditional civil libertarians by speaking out against the excessive use of force by government law-enforcement agents. He is a relentless critic of the actions of federal law enforcers in the deaths of Vickie and Samuel Weaver, who were killed by government agents in a Waco-like raid on their home near Naples, Idaho. (See "Ambush at Ruby Ridge," October 1993.) Craig called for an official investigation of the actions of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms agents involved in the raid. The department absolved the agents of any criminal wrongdoing in the raid but, as of late December, had refused to publicly release its 540-page report.

If the report remains under wraps, Craig has asked incoming Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch to convene hearings in which Attorney General Janet Reno and Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Deval Patrick would be questioned on the role of law-enforcement officials in the Weaver case. Such congressional hearings, to which Republican guru William Kristol has given the unfortunate name "show trials," drive news coverage by highlighting human drama. Using them to question government action, rather than call for more regulation, would mark a significant change in congressional dynamics.

CHAS GEER

Sen. Alan Simpson (R-Wyo.)

The six-foot, seven-inch cowboy was Bob Dole's favorite for Republican whip, a job he lost by one vote to Gingrich ally Lott. And Simpson's tongue is even sharper than Dole's or, for that matter, Gingrich's. For a story on the entitlements commission, I once asked Simpson about the onslaught he would face from seniors' groups because of his support for raising the Social Security retirement age. What about the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare? Simpson mentioned the group's president by name. "Martha McSteen," he said. "I'd like to boil her in oil."

Simpson's great sound bites guarantee him media prominence. And his favorite issues guarantee him a prominent role in coming Republican battles.

In the Senate, environmental policy is still in the hands of the Sierra Club—specifically its "environmental hero" John Chafee, the patrician Rhode Island Republican most famous for his support for nationalizing health care. In the 103rd Congress, Chafee joined green Democrats to block proposals making wetlands and other land-use policies friendlier to property owners. Chafee now chairs the Environment Committee. Simpson's assignment: to check Chafee.

Simpson had angled for the chairman's job himself, though Chafee was first in line by seniority. But he was defeated before he began, not by Chafee, but by Jesse Helms. Once the North Carolina senator started shooting his mouth off about Bill Clinton's weakness as commander in chief, the only way Dole could avoid a messy fight over Helms's chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee was to declare strict seniority in force—and that meant Chafee stayed.

A December 19 *Washington Times* story reports that conservatives have strong-armed Chafee to such an extent that he has privately agreed to not impede property-rights and "sound science" reforms in his committee. But if Chafee starts cozying up to the Natural Resources Defense Council, it will be up to Simpson to forge bipartisan coalitions with Southern and Western Democrats on land-use policies.

Simpson also plans to speak early and often on immigration—an issue he has called "red hot." He was an architect of the 1986 immigration reform act, which established sanctions against employers who hire undocumented workers. He favors tougher border patrols and some form of "tamper-proof" identification documents for all workers. But he opposes cutting off education and medical benefits to the citizen children of illegal immigrants, and unlike other conservatives he would not deny government benefits to green-card holders, telling *The New York Times* that "the only thing they can't do that you and I can is vote. Period."

Simpson may sound like a moderate on the subject, and that's the way he portrays himself. But he promises to stir up all sorts of trouble with his proposal to reduce the number of legal immigrants by 25 percent over the next five years, to 500,000 legal entries annually.

With much of the concern over immigration driven by law-and-order sentiment, that's a prescription for disaster. Immigration quotas, like import quotas on cars, are market-disrupting laws that seek to raise the price of a domestic product (in this case, labor) by keeping out foreign suppliers. But here products can walk across the border on their own; the buyers often have no domestic suppliers; and quota-driven shortages encourage ever greater law breaking. People concerned that illegal immigration erodes respect for law have two choices: raise quotas to something approaching a market-clearing level, or adopt a zero-tolerance policy. (The easiest analogy to understand, especially in the West, may be the 55-mph speed limit. If you want to encourage obedience to the law, you either raise the limit to a level appropriate for conditions or slap a huge fine on every other driver.)

Simpson may sound like a moderate on immigration, and that's the way he portrays himself. But he promises to stir up all sorts of trouble with his proposal to reduce the number of legal immigrants by 25 percent over the next five years, to 500,000 legal entries annually.

Merely cutting legal quotas does nothing to encourage people to obey the law; in fact, it's likely to have the opposite effect. Perhaps 1.2 million persons enter the country, legally and illegally, and stay every year. Unless the Immigration and Naturalization Service can dramatically accelerate the number of persons it deports—and it deported only 20,000 persons in 1993—Simpson's restrictions would create as many as 700,000 new law-breaking immigrants every year.

Theoretically, they could be sent to prison. But the United States currently has space for one million prisoners. To be effective, the Simpson plan would require the nation's prison capacity to double every 20 months—and that won't happen.

And while most illegals would never go to jail, a lot of employers might. Assuming the government enforced Simpson's immigration caps, law-enforcement agents would conduct frequent raids on businesses to check for illegal employees. As a result, employers would face constant harassment from federal officials, the type of regulatory burden Republicans say they oppose. Indeed, Rep. Lamar Smith of Texas, the Republicans' lead man on immigration in the House, has pushed for extending the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) law and asset-forfeiture laws to cover those who smuggle or harbor illegals. That could unleash the same regulatory terror on employers and landlords that OSHA and wetlands enforcers engage in now. We'll know how serious Republicans are about slashing the regulatory state if they ignore the Simpson/Smith positions on immigration. ®

Rick Henderson is Washington editor of REASON.

CHAS GEER

PRESIDENT

TRIAL

CONTINUED

[illegible] responded to REASON's November cover story, and author Edith Efron responds to the reader[illegible]

If one flies high over the reader mail, both "Talk Back to REASON" postcards (mostly unsigned) and signed letters, one sees three broad and emotionally intense reactions. Readers were either passionately appreciative or vehemently bored or violently antagonistic. Here is the overview:

The Friendlies

From the postcards: "fascinating," "compelling," "VERY interesting!!!," "intelligent and edifying," "a most astounding piece," "superb article…A+ writing," "fantastic," "fantastic," "outstanding," "outstanding," "excellent," "brilliant," "splendid," "riveting…fascinating …superb," "should be mandatory reading for all citizens."

From the letters: "I…thank REASON for Edith Efron's fine article," *(Roy Hofschneider, Upland, CA)*; "superb article," *(Manuel S. Klausner, Los Angeles, CA)*; "Thank you, thank you, thank you, for Edith Efron's article on Bill Clinton's mind," *(Elizabeth Desilets, Malden, MA)*; "Edith Efron's fascinating and frightening analysis of Bill Clinton's 'cognitive disability' helps us to understand [him]. If he has an exaggerated need to please, is especially sensitive to criticism, has grandiose notions, has poor powers of introspection and is unable to hang on to the meaning of abstrac-

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tions, we can better understand [his puzzling statements and behavior]," *(Joan Mitchell Blumenthal, New York, NY)*; "Thanks so much for Edith Efron's study on the mental processes of Bill Clinton. Fascinating, and most instructive....It seems her article and Nathaniel Branden's *Six Pillars of Self Esteem* [reviewed in the same issue] are linked. Here we have a president who lacks a number of the necessary 'pillars' of self-esteem: cognitive confidence, accurate perception of self and reality, and such a need for other people's presence to validate his own existence that he cannot bear being alone with himself for even a few moments....He seems to obtain his self-hood from others (Peter Keating?), hungers for power over others (Ellsworth Toohey?) and cannot bear to learn the truth about who he is (James Taggart?). He concentrates on the pain of others to block out his own internal and personal pain (Philip Rearden?). He's a sad case, all right. Perhaps we should send him a copy of Branden's book, and set up a 31-day program for him? Nah...the last thing we want is an *efficacious* Clinton before November elections! Let's go to the polls and really make the man feel pain, by throwing every Clintonite out of office! *Then* we send him the book!" *(Diane Joy Baker, Cincinnati, OH)*; "I appreciate Ms. Efron's effort in the presentation at removing the 'political issues' from any contention. It is my opinion she has largely succeeded. She has brought about a change in my feelings for Mr. Clinton; where once I detested him for what he was, approaching hate, I now have a tinge of sorrow for the man. Were he not in the position he is in, I would have a great deal of sympathy for him." *(Harry J. Herder Jr., Hayward, WI)*

The Bored

From the postcards: "It would have been 10 times better if it had been condensed into 2–3 pages," "It was good but it was too long," "too long and repetitious," "a bit long," "too repetitive," "much too long," "much too much precious space wasted; it could have been dealt with in a 4–5 page article," "way too long," "too long, not persuasive," "far too long, goes without saying."

From the letters: "I really think Efron is grasping at straws. While she did not say that our Prez was certifiably bonkers, she came close. I am sure if you judged former President Reagan under the same scrutiny (or Bush, even), you could piece together a case for ineptitude. On top of that, it was just plain dry reading. If I want to be barraged with such rhetoric, I can do my homework. I was bored halfway through." *(Paul R. Hawley, Loma Linda, CA)*; "Whatever led you to devote 24 precious pages to Edith Efron's tedious and repetitively detailed psychological analysis of Bill Clinton's mind? She may have a point: Bill probably is nuts. But why take so much space to 'prove' it? I don't read REASON for its ironclad psychiatric diagnoses. It's political analysis I look for when I open each issue. For just a brief whiff of that, I had to slog through to the very last page of this vicious, issue-hogging article." *(Shirlee A. Hoffman, Chicago, IL)*

The Hostiles

From the postcards: "You print more garbage like this, I will cancel my subscription," "unenlightening psychobabble and just plain stupid," "S.I. Hayakawa is rolling in his grave at her unethical use of language," "one-sided...not fair to Clinton."

From the letters: "I just can't believe that you devoted 25 pages to the namecalling and mudslinging in November 1994's issue on Clinton. It was so mean-spirited that it spoke volumes about the *author's* mental state—and I was disappointed beyond words that the REASON editors chose to publish an article of such length from such a source." *(Mary Fayer, Richland, WA)*; "Twenty-eight pages of Clinton bashing in the last issue is like eight hours of Rush Limbaugh....Sorry, after over 15 years as a subscriber, I can't take it any more. Please cancel my subscription and refund the remainder." *(Harold Trautman, Portland, OR)*; "Please cancel my subscription immediately. REASON magazine, which I eagerly awaited for well over a decade, no longer exists. Your 24-page piece on Bill Clinton's mind is the most repugnant piece of 'journalism' since Barry Goldwater was psychoanalyzed in 1964....I must conclude that REASON wants to emulate the explosive circulation growth of rags like *American Spectator*. Tabloid journalism—the frenzied exploitation of fears and prejudices—is overwhelming American culture. So while I'm sure the gutter will bring you more readers, I will not be one of them." *(Michael J. Hihn, CompuServe 76360,2063)*; "What were you all thinking when you published Edith Efron's article (dissertation)?...The stuff of Ms. Efron's article...is the conjecture-laden, paranoid, whiney, half-informed/half made-up drivel I can get from Rush Limbaugh every day for three hours (but choose not to)....Ms. Efron's article is so far from your mission of "Free Minds and Free Markets," and so much lower in research quality, and so petty in its tone, that if this is the editorial direction REASON is taking, I no longer wish to receive your magazine." *(John Larkin, Washington, D.C.)*

Ms. Efron comments: It is unnecessary to say that if I am to be pelted with adjectives, I prefer those of the appreciative writers. I thank Joan Mitchell Blumenthal for her clear summary of Clinton's traits—in particular, for her recognition that his inability to connect abstractions and concretes is essential to understanding his incompetence. Diane Baker's analysis of my article via the works of Ayn Rand was amusing. I note that she needs

"Ms. Efron has brought about a change in my feelings for Mr. Clinton; where once I detested him for what he was, approaching hate, I now have a tinge of sorrow for the man. Were he not in the position he is in, I would have a great deal of sympathy for him."

—Harry J. Herder Jr.

TROY THOMAS

four Ayn Rand villains to describe one Clinton. If she works at it, she can get it up to six. Harry Herder's shift in feelings from a detestation of Clinton, verging on hatred, to pity touches me. I very much wanted readers to feel that way.

All writers inspire boredom in some readers. One cannot thrill

"In describing Bill Clinton as crazy, we let our political and social culture off the hook. I think it more important to face up to the really sad truth that once again our electoral system gave us what we wanted."
—*Sam Smith*

everyone. But these Bored are not like any other bored I've ever seen. These do not just yawn and sensibly take up with a writer more to their taste. These want to make a federal case out of their boredom. If there were an EEOC for the Bored, they would sue me. This is unusual. Can one answer the Bored? No, one can't. They are the mirror opposites of the people who find my writing compelling, riveting, and fascinating. Those people always report that they couldn't put my writing down. The Bored are the folks who cannot pick it up.

By now, I presume you are getting the idea. The article on Clinton was compelling, riveting, fascinating, brilliant, superbly written, sensitive. It was tedious, repetitious, too long, too long, too long. It was repugnant, ill-written, slimy, mean-spirited, tabloid, Rush Limbaugh, *American Spectator*, cancel my subscription, cancel my subscription.

There is, of course, no need to answer abusive letters. But these have one important use. Certain themes come up repeatedly and, by implication at least, certain questions are repeatedly asked. What follow are letters—some abusive, some merely critical, a few supportive—that address issues which appear to concern many of the writers.

General Criticisms

EDITH EFRON OFFERS some convincing explanations as to why she considers Bill Clinton odd. Unfortunately, in doing so she loses track of the really interesting question, namely why so many people considered him so normal for so long. As an early and well-battered critic of Clinton's I was repeatedly reminded that whatever characteristics he possessed were not his alone, but resonated comfortably throughout the city's establishment.

What might be considered rational behavior by Efron or myself is regarded as archaic stodginess by postmodernists such as Clinton. In fact, to a true postmodernist, for whom words are merely tools of transient symbolic utility, the whole idea of a magazine called REASON is absurd. Again, Clinton is unfortunately not odd, but only an extreme product of the situational values, unremitting hubris, and manipulative skills taught by the nation's law and management schools in the 1980s. I have run into Clintonesque types who are university presidents, ministers, museum directors, and even farmers. I have, I confess, come to believe that you shouldn't trust anyone within a five-year standard deviation of Bill Clinton's age.

In describing Bill Clinton as crazy, we let our political and social culture off the hook. I think it more important to face up to the really sad truth that once again our electoral system gave us what we wanted. The good news is that we seem to have discovered our mistake and that the failings of the Clinton administration may have finally killed that excrementitious decade whose only service to the world was the invention of the minivan.

Sam Smith
Editor, The Progressive Review
Author, Shadows of Hope
Washington, D.C.

AS A LIBERTARIAN subscriber to REASON, I have many reasons to lament Clinton's presidency, even to enjoy reading an accurate account of the clinical causes of its decline. But as a subscriber to REASON because I am enlightened by its analysis of policy, I was disappointed that you chose to sacrifice 48 columns (!) and cover status to an article that had nothing to do with policy.

Only in the last column of her article does Efron begin to touch upon questions which would have been interesting for us to explore more fully—namely, is there a systemic fault in our electoral process which permits, possibly even promotes, the election of idiots into higher office?

Boris Starosta
Charlottesville, VA

I WAS VERY disappointed by the fact that this magazine published a *24-page* article purporting to present a *psychological* profile of Bill Clinton. As an economist I find such a topic inherently uninteresting. As a matter of fact, it makes very little difference to those suffering the adverse effects of Clinton's policies how those policies came to be formulated.

But more importantly, this article perpetuates the current media myth that the presidency is a powerful political institution in the formulation of domestic policy. Modern presidents have found themselves hampered by congressional budgetary powers and by the fact that their constituency includes many powerful interests on both sides of important policy debates. This latter fact often leads to paralysis in the executive branch. Congress, in contrast, deals with such special-interest conflicts on a piecemeal basis. The fact that Congress extended the committee system in the early 1970s by allowing subcommittees to proliferate is evidence of its desire to improve its dealings with special interests. If libertarians are interested in reducing the political power of those in Washington, they need to stop focusing on Bill Clinton (tempting target though he may be) and start

thinking about a radical reform of the way Congress does business.

George S. Berger
Economics Department
University of Pittsburgh-Johnstown
Johnstown, PA

Ms. Efron comments: I quoted Sam Smith twice in my article—on the subject of Clinton's dependence on others to give him a sense of his own reality, as well as on the subject of the shallowness of Clinton's commitment to his own professed values. So acute an observer of Clinton is Smith that I had to be forcibly restrained from quoting several yards more of his book, about half of which is a brilliant and marvelously well-written study of Clinton as an exemplar of irrational "postmodern" trends. Smith summarizes those trends in his letter as "the situational values, unremitting hubris, and manipulative skills taught by the nation's law and management schools in the 1980s," which he describes as an "excrementitious decade."

Smith despises the cultural counterrevolution of the '80s the way elderly ex-leftist neoconservatives despise the cultural revolution of the '60s. If one thinks in terms of decades, Smith and I should be natural enemies. But we are not, and for a very good reason: I share Smith's horror at the assault on words, on definitions; at the systematic destruction of language as a way of identifying objective reality. I share his revulsion at the mockery of the very notion of objective reality, of the need for a rational epistemology, of the need for logic.

According to Smith, the postmodernist inhabits a fluid universe where A can be non-A at will; where there is no past and there is no future, only the need of the moment; where there is no truth and there are no lies. This is the universe inhabited by Clinton, he says, and the really interesting question is "why so many people considered him so normal for so long."

There is, however, a significant difference between Smith and me, and it may or may not be bridgeable: Smith sees Clinton, the two Clintons, and the Clintonites as stamped out by an external cookie cutter called "the postmodernist culture." He therefore investigated the external culture. I investigated Clinton's internal psychology, a psychology formed decades before the cultural developments Smith laments.

Smith thinks we have to choose between an externalist and internalist explanation and that "in describing Bill Clinton as crazy, we let our political and social culture off the hook." (I expressly said Clinton is not "crazy.") I say Smith is letting Clinton's individual mind off the hook. But we do not, in fact, have to choose.

Boris Starosta was deeply disappointed that my article deprived him of a portion of the policy fix he relies on REASON to provide every month. And George Berger simply states that he finds the subject of the president's psychology "inherently uninteresting," spelling out the institutional issues he thinks REASON should be writing about. Together, they think my article is almost entirely irrelevant to policy.

That depends on how one defines policy. Both Starosta and Berger, and others like them who felt deprived of the roster of policy analyses characteristic of REASON, are defining policy in the tradition of the social sciences, where only institutions and groups of people are worthy of discussion. They have been taught to look down at anyone who takes individuals, "personalities," seriously. But there are crucially important fields which focus on individuals, such as painting, sculpture, literature, history, biography, and certain journalistic forms, such as the profile, which traces its lineage back to fiction and biography. And the profile as used in modern American journalism is a potent political weapon.

Finally, I must say that it is particularly weird to find myself trying to convince individualists that individuals are worth thinking about. For whose sake are they so desperately concerned with policy? For pigeons?

Sources

WHAT A WONDERFULLY perceptive piece in this month's REASON. Thank you for going easy on my youthful tendencies to purpleness. I am more embarrassed by the writing than the sentiment.

Philip Martin
Staff writer
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Little Rock, AR

SINCE NONE OF the writers are the president's psychiatrist, any conclusions reached are obviously subjective and only useful to defame the person.

Robert A. Turk
Rockwell, TX

TO MS. EFRON'S credit, she has obviously read extensively the published accounts of Mr. Clinton's life and times, but these sources are at best second-hand, and most likely third-hand. This reliance on second- and third-hand sources of information greatly diminishes the credibility of Ms. Efron's article and her conclusions.

I did not find the article totally, blatantly offensive because, as Ms. Efron notes, Bill Clinton is a public figure of no small significance. The article did have many interesting insights, which, *if they are true*, could serve to explain Bill Clinton's psyche. Unfortunately, these insights rest on shaky foundations, those second- and third-hand sources. Because Ms. Efron has no personal knowledge of Bill Clinton (even if she has met him, I seriously doubt whether she is his confidant in any way, shape, or form), her information regarding Mr. Clinton's mental processes comes solely from other people who may or may not have axes to grind against Bill Clinton, may be lying, or may simply be faulty judges of such matters. Ms. Efron's conclusions, tightly reasoned and well documented as they are, are merely speculations on the inner workings of Mr. Clinton's mind.

Jason Smith

Ms. Efron comments: My thanks to Philip Martin, the Arkansas journalist whom I quoted in the article as the writer of a youthful hymn to Clinton's glory, describing him as the Sun King. I'm particularly pleased to have someone who has covered most of

Bill Clinton's political life find my article "wonderfully perceptive."

Martin's note, however, would have no meaning to Robert Turk, since Martin is not Clinton's psychiatrist. According to Turk, any conclusions Martin may have reached "are obviously subjective and only useful to defame." Nor would it assist Jason Smith, who is determined to settle only for first-hand sources. It is not just Martin whom Smith would judge in this fashion. It could be Meg Greenfield, editorial page editor of *The Washington Post*, or it could be the *Post*'s David Broder, dean of America's political journalists, or it could be Maureen Dowd of *The New York Times*, or Joe Klein of *Newsweek*. Smith is appalled by the very notion of settling for second-hand, let alone third-hand, sources and a number of other REASON readers were similarly outraged. I could understand why they might balk at trusting conservative and libertarian journalists, on the ground of bias against a liberal president, but I am disturbed by the inability of such readers to recognize that the overwhelming majority of the journalists I quote in my article are liberals and that this means that my sources were biased in favor of the president, not against him.

I was totally unprepared, given REASON's demographics, to find highly educated people—academics, professionals, and business executives—who have no idea how to evaluate my sources. I yield to no one in my reverence for first-hand sources. In my last book, on environmental cancer and carcinogenesis, I had about 1,500 references, all first-hand sources, which fattened the book by another 100 pages. But there is something bizarre about this passion for first-hand sources in dedicated readers of a magazine which does not publish footnotes. And their demand for first-hand sources for information about a president of the United States is far more bizarre, because it tells me these particular readers do not have the faintest idea how political journalism works or how citizens acquire their information about the inhabitants of the White House.

In my article, sources were, with a few Arkansas exceptions, among the most authoritative political journalists in the United States. The list could be expanded, but those whom I cited are luminaries of the American press. They write for the national newspapers, for the national newsweeklies, and for nationally read political and opinion journals. Some appear frequently on network TV, on CNN, on C-SPAN, on CNBC. Among the politically literate, the people I quoted are household names. And they should be, because such stellar journalists are among the most powerful and influential interpreters of the American political scene. To put it plainly, they tell the political classes what to think. I haven't the faintest idea whether those who expressed their craving for first-hand sources actually want to know how to assess my sources. But for those who do, I offer some information and advice.

The information is this: Despite the overpowering illusion of intimacy created by television, citizens do not and cannot know very much about an American president. There is a chronic and overwhelming shortage of first-hand sources of information. An American president plays a symbolic role in our society and may not make a blithering fool of himself in public if anyone can prevent it. Thus, almost nothing that the reporter or the citizen sees is spontaneous. All public speech is rehearsed. Even gestures are rehearsed. P.R. techniques are used as a barricade against the prying eyes of the press and the citizens.

Even when a private interview with the president is granted, and a journalist is allowed to pass the public barricade, the reporter immediately hits a private barricade. Questions must be submitted in advance, and only a fool would submit provocative questions. The situation produces self-censorship. The interview itself is monitored by an aide or press secretary, who will terminate a line of questioning curtly if a forbidden subject is broached. What is forbidden? Everything that might conceivably embarrass the president, which in Clinton's case is almost everything.

There are exceptions to this rule, of course—quid pro quo arrangements offering the president advantageous coverage in exchange for exclusivity. But for the most part, an interview with the president is primarily useful to the working journalist because it permits him to say, "I was at the White House and the president told me...," which causes people to think they are hearing the inside dope.

That is not usually how journalists get the inside dope. They get it by talking *about* the president with others—which is to say, from second- and third-hand sources. By the time a citizen hears it, the information is fourth-hand. And this is to describe the best and most meticulously done presidential journalism in the United States.

Herewith an example of the sources of one of the journalists I quote—Elizabeth Drew. It is an author's note in her book on the Clinton presidency, *On the Edge*, which was published after my article appeared: "This book is based on regular interviews with every high official in the Clinton White House on the broad range of issues, foreign and domestic, that the President confronted—or was confronted with. My interviewing also involved frequent sessions with cabinet officers involved in these issues, and others in the various agencies, as well as members of Congress and Capitol Hill staff members whose angle of vision and expertise could shed light on the Clinton presidency. Not-so-famous White House aides were also tremendously helpful in clarifying issues

"Despite the overpowering illusion of intimacy created by television, citizens do not and cannot know very much about an American president. Journalists get the inside dope by talking *about* the president with others—which is to say, from second- and third-hand sources."

—Edith Efron

and helping me understand events."

But that, some REASON readers would say, is just a lot of unsubstantiated gossip. Wrong. That is how gossip is substantiated. That is how it is confirmed. Apart from direct quotes from Clinton, what you see in my article is *confirmed* observation. I quote journalists, including Drew, who devote their days, and often their nights, to constant interviews and confirming missions. If I quote five stellar journalists saying that the president cannot organize the toys in the bathtub, I am relying on at least 10 other sources—two confirmers per journalist. If it's a hot or controversial observation of Clinton, I am relying on at least 15—three confirmers per journalist. Behind every journalist's observation of Clinton's behavior in my article lies the sort of reporting Drew describes.

So much for information. What about advice? Here it is: If you want to test what I have written, READ. Pick two national newspapers, two national newsweeklies, three political journals in addition to REASON, and read *all* books published on the president or his wife. Keep all my major points about Clinton in mind, and track the material on those points to see if writers are confirming or refuting them.

Start with Elizabeth Drew's book. She is one of the most careful journalists in America and politically sympathetic to Clinton. And if you've read reviews of the book, you have just gotten the barest hint of the degree to which the information it contains about Clinton's personal characteristics validates my article.

Decisions

I AM SADDENED that one of my favorite magazines has been infected by the psychobabble that is characteristic of so much contemporary journalism. Moreover, Edith Efron is just exactly wrong about Clinton. The problem with President Clinton is not his indecisiveness but that his judgment is so bad when he does make a decision. Most of the critics of Clinton's indecisiveness are from the left; they want Clinton to make more decisions of the type they prefer. Does REASON really want Clinton to make more such decisions? Clinton merits praise or criticism for what he says and what he does, not on the basis of some wholly untestable speculations about his mental processes. Moreover, to this reader, such pop psychology is morally offensive.

William A. Niskanen
Chairman
The Cato Institute
Washington, D.C.

Ms. Efron comments: If William Niskanen wants to establish that I am "exactly wrong" about Clinton's indecisiveness, he will have to refute my sources. He will have to demonstrate that the following journalists are "exactly wrong" on the question of Clinton's indecisiveness: Eleanor Clift, Mark Miller, Bob Woodward, Cokie Roberts, Elizabeth Drew, Anthony Lewis, Hobart Rowan, Judy Woodruff, E.J. Dionne, David Shaw, Jeffrey Klein, Paul Greenberg, Bob Cohn, Al Hunt, Michael Kelly, Mary McCrory, Ann Devroy, and Ruth Marcus. Unlike Robert Turk and Jason Smith, Niskanen is indifferent to the truth or falsity of the statements by the journalists I have quoted. He is interested only in motivation and strategy: True or not, if "the left" is motivated to say something, REASON should not say it.

Niskanen ought to brush up on the historical sciences, where speculation abounds and theories are impossible to test because they pertain to unique events that occurred billions, or hundreds of millions, of years in the past: cosmology, much of astronomy, geology, evolutionary biology, biological anthropology. Niskanen's definition of science is defective.

He could, however, test his own psychological theory, to wit: "If REASON calls attention to a trait of Clinton's psychology, Clinton will promptly reverse that trait." Nice, short, elegant, easy. Do it.

Psychology

ALTHOUGH I AGREE with much of Ms. Efron's article, I must raise two objections, one ethical and one intellectual.

Libertarians should have learned a lesson from the presidential campaign of '64, when Barry Goldwater was unfairly slandered as a paranoid by several high-profile psychiatrists. Since that time it has been considered unethical for psychiatrists to engage in speculation on a public figure's psychiatric diagnosis. The fact that Edith Efron is not a mental health professional makes her use of diagnostic classification even more disturbing, since she is not trained and experienced in the field and is basing her assumptions purely on collateral data and not clinical examination.

The second objection is that one cannot impugn a pseudo-intellectual by using a pseudo-intellectual manual. Thomas Szasz has written extensively about the silliness of DSM-3R ("Diatribe of Sophist Musings," in my opinion), which once considered homosexuality a mental disorder and now considers a whole host of problems of everyday living forms of mental illness.

Bill Clinton should be judged upon his history and his behavior. He is a megalomaniacal, insecure, distractable, habitual liar from a broken home. In essence, he is a brighter version of his brother (and thus a poster child for Charles Murray's "cognitive elite"). A psychoanalysis based upon second-hand sources is neither necessary nor appropriate.

James O'Brien, M.D.
Psychiatry
Los Angeles, CA

I AM INCENSED with Edith Efron's vicious personal attack masquerading as psychoanalysis. A president's personality—his "character"—should be at issue. If he has a mental illness that may affect his performance, that should be too, as long as the discussion is informed and rational. This piece fits neither characterization. It is character assassination with a thin veneer of psychology intended to lend it legitimacy. It is telling that this piece was not written by a psychiatrist or psychotherapist but by a "journalist and author." Since when are journalists experts in DSM-3R diagnoses, let alone their interpretation? From a distance? Clearly, qualified professionals should do the diagnosing here.

Efron's piece is an attempt to label Bill Clinton, not examine his mental competence. And she throws almost every diagnosis

in the book at him trying to find something that will stick in the reader's mind.

John Cronan
Hatfield, PA

PRESIDENT CLINTON HAS no shortage of political inadequacies. It is also perfectly legitimate to question presidential style and motives in his handling of political issues, in addition to, of course, his decisions. Claiming he is mentally ill and engaging in psychiatric name-calling, however, such as "obsessive compulsive personality disorder" and "attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder"—oops, sorry: Efron says it's only significant that ADHD sufferers *think* Clinton is a fellow sufferer—only communicates that conservatives cannot challenge Clinton on the issues. Conservatives—and REASON—can do better, much better.

Using psychiatric labels to discredit a president is the last rhetorical refuge of a political scoundrel and holds the strong potential for winning (deserved) sympathy for the victim. With enemies like Efron, the president will need fewer friends.

Richard E. Vatz
Associate Psychology Editor
USA Today Magazine
Towson, MD

YOUR FEATURE ARTICLE in the November issue "Can the President Think?" was more than superb. The author, Edith Efron, expresses more insight than I think even she is aware and did a truly magnificent job. I hesitate to say it was self-revealing for me, since this brings the image of a weeping confessional to the fore, which is definitely not my intent. Rather, I would mainly like to thank both the magazine and the author.

That being said, I offer the following in the hope that it will aid in the comprehension of what must seem a totally incomprehensible mindset. I think that by briefly exploring from the inside, relating how such a mind ticks, I can open a window clarifying the view.

In my mind, which I believe was as your article describes, there was a most definite cognitive impairment, although I did not realize it. Seeing all sides of an issue can be beneficial, but imagine trying to deal with everything your brain ever learned about a subject all at once, and then add in every other subject that may have a connection, and everything related to those subjects. The part of the brain which is supposed to impose control and order on all of these neurological impulses is not working. Seizing just one idea is almost impossible. Staying with that one idea is daunting. Getting lost in the jungle is common and the confusion can be terrifying.

There does seem to be some relief in learning new information. Whatever is last entered into the brain tends to remain a short while on top, masking the lack of order. Therefore the thirst for information is neverending. The problem with this escape is in the way that it works; by avoiding the deeper chaos, one also avoids all that is basis for an original decision, idea, or thought. The cycle is self-perpetuating; the more that is learned, the more internal competition.

In a sense more practical to your article, this means that if one viewpoint is learned, it has definite prominence. If contradictory information is then learned, it has precedence. Listening to many advisers is almost suicidal, amounting to saying yes to everyone in the room. There are few if any filters to qualify any views acquired, and treachery is easy to implant, as is the thought that prior advice was treacherous.

The marvel is not chaos, but the appearance of any results! Competent at analysis after the fact, it's very visible that something is very wrong, but the ego won't let go. The resultant mantra: *I try too hard to do too much*, reflects yes, of course, I'm smart enough to know something's wrong, but it's only because I'm so much better and work so much harder than everyone else that I get into trouble. Do you want me to slow down and stop working miracles for you? *Normal* others are incapable of seeing all that's being done and need constant explanations, poor sots. One so impaired fails to see how anyone else ever gets anything done with so little apparent effort, and decides they must not be accomplishing anything of quality.

Michael P. Masora
Rockledge, FL

"Libertarians should have learned a lesson from the presidential campaign of '64, when Barry Goldwater was unfairly slandered as a paranoid by several high-profile psychiatrists. The fact that Edith Efron is not a mental health professional makes her use of diagnostic classification even more disturbing."

—James O'Brien, M.D.

Ms. Efron comments: I'm pleased that Dr. O'Brien agreed with "much" of my article and would have liked to know what that "much" consists of. I regret that he did not read the article with care before leaping to his typewriter. I said repeatedly that I was basing my investigation on diagnostic terms that Bill Clinton had used about himself after consulting a therapist. Dr. O'Brien knows that Clinton has had therapy since he mentioned it in a published letter to REASON (April 1994). On March 15, 1991, Clinton informed Charles Allen, an Arkansas educator, that he was "compulsively overactive." This appeared in Allen's book *The Comeback Kid*. On March 8, 1992, Peter Applebome reported in *The New York Times Magazine* that Clinton had told him that he had had therapy and had learned that his "compulsive and obsessive ambition" damaged his relationships. If Clinton wishes to tell the world about his psychological diagnoses and problems—and telling *The New York Times* is telling

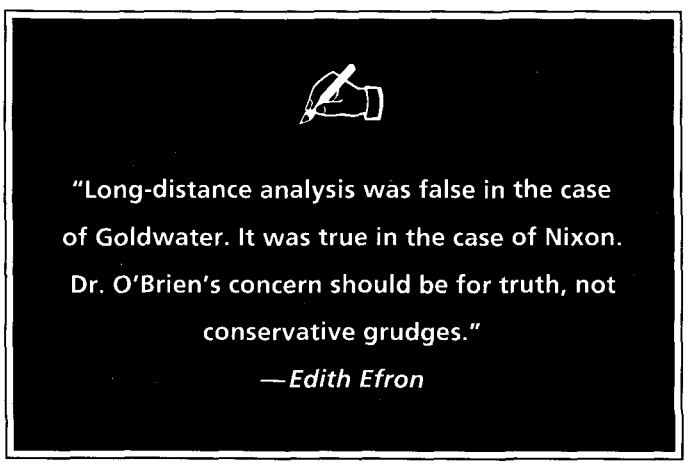
the world—Dr. O'Brien can have no ethical objection to my discussing them.

If he had read the article more carefully, he would also have found my grounds for assessing the severity of Clinton's condition. *The Agenda* by Bob Woodward was by no means the only source of information that I used, but it was a very significant source. The picture that emerged in Woodward's book was of a seriously disabled man. Mickey Kaus, a senior editor at *The New Republic*, reached the same conclusion in that magazine's November 28 edition—one month after my article appeared. Kaus described Woodward's book as portraying a disabled Clinton, but he tried to blame that portrayal on the president's political adviser George Stephanopoulos. Kaus wrote, "Bob Woodward's *The Agenda* described a near-dysfunctional president kept on track by Stephanopoulos' benign machinations." After making this charge, Kaus did not develop or prove it and never referred to it again in the article. Nor did he deny, or quote anyone who denied, that Clinton was "near-dysfunctional." I would suggest to Dr. O'Brien exactly what I suggested to Messrs. Turk and Smith: that he read Elizabeth Drew's new book. He will find further support for the portrait of Clinton in my article.

It apparently hasn't occurred to Dr. O'Brien that in his own field there are people who specialize in assessing the psychological state of foreign leaders to whom they have no personal access. They do it by poring over intelligence reports—which rely heavily on news accounts and other journalistic material—in an attempt to identify patterns of thought, emotions, and behavior. In a situation where access is impossible and yet some knowledge of a human psychology is needed, long-distance assessment is made. It is not "psychoanalysis." It is, essentially, a psychologically knowledgeable integration of observations by journalists.

Dr. O'Brien's own description of Clinton as "a megalomaniacal, insecure, distractable, habitual liar from a broken home," emerges from an integration of journalistic observations. It is psychologically deadly even without formal diagnostic terminology. (I assume he is using *megalomaniacal* colloquially rather than diagnostically.) What O'Brien really opposes is my use of diagnostic labels.

There is a term which is badly needed in the medical and psychiatric professions: the *recognition diagnosis*. It describes the response to those advertisements which consist of patterns of recognizable symptoms for heart disease, for cancer, for diabetes, for depression, and so on. The purpose of these ads is to teach laymen to memorize the symptoms so that they can rush themselves or someone else to a physician or a psychiatrist who will then make a true diagnosis and provide treatment. A "recognition diagnosis" provides just enough information to know that the problem is serious and to get someone to a doctor. We are constantly encouraged by more and more ads to make more and more recognition diagnoses of more and more diseases. You cannot logically teach laymen like me to recognize patterns or symptoms of diseases and then denounce them—or me—for making diagnoses and practicing psychiatry without a license. For the purpose of offering readers a recognition diagnosis, DSM-3R is perfectly satisfactory.


"Long-distance analysis was false in the case of Goldwater. It was true in the case of Nixon. Dr. O'Brien's concern should be for truth, not conservative grudges."
—Edith Efron

Dr. O'Brien's assumption that I did not talk to psychiatrists and therapists about what I was researching is unreasonable. I am a journalist with 50 years of experience, and it would have been inconceivable to me to undertake such a project without counsel and assistance from members of O'Brien's profession. He knows perfectly well that behind the scenes psychiatrists, like all other human beings, talk freely. They talked freely to me.

Further, I devoted almost a page of REASON to discussing the moral and political justifications for this project. If Dr. O'Brien does not agree with my reasoning, he should say so and explain why. He should not ignore it and keep reciting the sad tale of Barry Goldwater. Long-distance analysis was false in the case of Goldwater. It was true in the case of Nixon. His concern should be for truth, not conservative grudges.

There is a legitimate public concern raised by Clinton's behavior. Nothing catastrophic would occur within the country because of it: There are too many sources of power that compete with the executive. Clinton could sleep his term away and it wouldn't matter too much; in fact, the country might be better off. But he is our commander in chief. He has life-and-death power over Americans and millions of other human beings. It is preposterous to say that the press should not investigate his condition and that citizens do not have the right to know about it.

If Dr. O'Brien stopped calling what I wrote a "psychoanalysis," he would become less agitated. I didn't call it a psychoanalysis. It is not a psychoanalysis. It is a psychological profile. I did not think I was playing doctor. I was playing journalist, a role for which I am qualified.

To John Cronan: See my answer to Dr. O'Brien.

To Richard Vatz: See my answer to Dr. O'Brien. Also, see the letter from Michael Masora.

To Michael Masora: It was very generous of you to prepare so careful an analysis of your condition and to hope that it might help others. Even the short sections of your powerfully written letter that we are publishing will indeed help readers to understand why people with conditions similar to yours identify with President Clinton. I really do hope you will improve.

To all: I do not discuss letters from the people in the mental health field who have written to offer their own interpretations of Clinton or elaborations of the one I published. While I don't doubt that some of them are right, my discussion is restricted to the problems Clinton has publicly identified in himself. R

Tobacco Road

By Ed Carson

Cigarette smuggling threatens to become a major problem.

THERE'S A GIANT SUCKING SOUND IN the United States—and you don't need to be Ross Perot to hear it. It's the sound of hundreds of thousands of Americans smoking cigarettes smuggled from Mexico and other points of entry. And it's growing louder every day.

Over the past 15 years, the average state and federal tax on a pack of cigarettes has gone up 152 percent—from 21 cents to 53 cents. And some states are way above the average. Michigan, for instance, raised its state cigarette tax 200 percent in May 1994, from 25 cents a pack to a national high of 75 cents.

With politicians hot for tax revenue and cigarette prohibitionists on the march, the trend can only continue. Indeed, one of the few things Congress seemed to agree on during the health-care debate was the easiest way to get money to pay for national health care: Raise cigarette taxes. The Senate Finance Committee's bill proposed an increase in the federal cigarette tax of more than 900 percent.

The effects of such prohibition-by-taxation are as predictable as they are usually ignored. Cigarette smuggling is well on its way to becoming a major problem in the United States. Raising cigarette taxes any further risks repeating Canada's recent disastrous experience with cigarette smuggling, which threatened "the very fabric of Canadian society," according to Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, when he announced deep cuts in cigarette taxes a year ago.

CONTRABAND CIGARETTES HELD NO MORE than 2 percent of the total cigarette market in Canada until 1991, when the government imposed a value-added tax and increased the federal cigarette tax by 146 percent. After the tax increase, however, the price differential between cigarettes sold in Canada and those in the United States soared to more than CDN$35 a carton. More and more smokers refused to pay as much as CDN$50 for a fully taxed carton of cigarettes when they could buy the same brand on the black market for CDN$20–40.

The result was an invitation to organized crime. Mohawk Indians from tribes along the U.S.-Canada border, biker gangs, and Asian Triads smuggled cigarettes across the border in boats, airplanes, trucks, vans, legitimate courier companies, and snowmobiles.

Ironically, most of the smuggled cigarettes were made in Canada. Canadian tobacco companies exported 15.6 billion cigarettes to the United States in 1993, up more than 830 percent from 1990. Because there was no apparent increased U.S. demand for Canadian cigarettes, it's widely accepted that almost all of the exported cigarettes, on which no Canadian taxes were paid, were smuggled back into Canada.

These cigarettes were sold by street vendors, out of the backs of cars, at flea markets, at restaurants, at bars, at convenience stores, and at high schools. When one smoker hooked up with a dealer, all of his or her friends and co-workers were connected as well. The October 20, 1992 *Globe and Mail* of Toronto reported that a 77-year-old woman was buying "hot smokes" for members of her bridge club and that a surgeon became the black market supplier for his co-workers at a Montreal hospital. Many of the smokers who were uneasy about breaking the law decided it was OK when they saw that "everybody's doing it."

Not everybody, but it started getting close. Before the tax hike, one in 50 cigarettes smoked in Canada had evaded taxes, estimates the forensic and investigative accounting firm of Lindquist Avey Macdonald Baskerville in a study sponsored by the Canadian tobacco industry. By the end of 1993, nearly one in three cigarettes was contraband. An August 1994 report by the Non-Smokers' Rights Association (Canada) disputes those figures. But it concedes that one in four cigarettes may have been contraband in 1993.

Smuggling particularly hurt "mom and pop" convenience stores, which rely heavily on cigarette sales. Rob Stamler, a partner with Lindquist Avey and a former assistant commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, says that many retailers began carrying "dual inventory"—legal cigarettes over the counter, illegal smokes below. Retailers also were victims of a crime wave, as it became more lucrative for thieves to skip the cash register and head straight for the cigarettes.

The government tried cracking down on cigarette smuggling, but the police didn't get much support. "Everyone thinks the taxes on cigarettes are too high, so it's not a crime to buy them [illegally]," Staff Sergeant Walter Wafer, head of the Mounties' customs-and-excise section in Montreal, told the Toronto *Globe and Mail*.

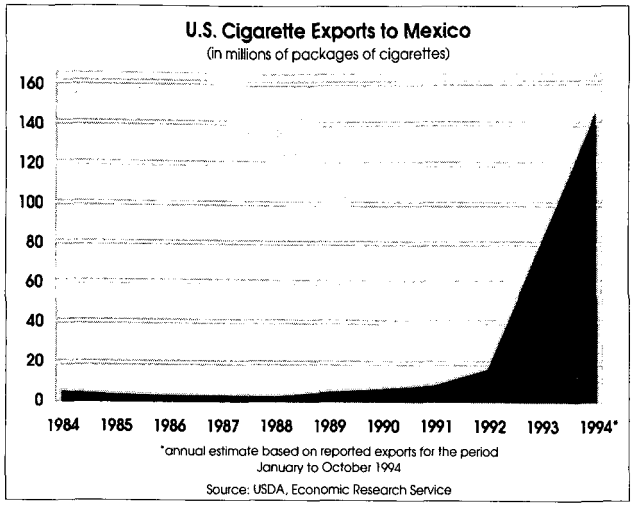
The government's inability to enforce an unpopular law only emboldened Canadians to become more defiant. On January 24, 1994, 75 store owners in St. Eustache, Quebec, rebelled by openly selling contraband cigarettes. Hundreds of Canadians waited hours to buy cigarettes for less than half the legal price. The police, perhaps deciding in this instance that it was better to be loved than feared, made no arrests.

Such upfront defiance of the law alarmed Canadian politicians. Even more disturbing to them were signs that cigarette tax evasion was having spill-over effects on other taxes. To stop the fiscal, political, and social hemorrhaging, in Feb-

ruary the federal and five provincial governments made deep cuts in cigarette taxes, which essentially eliminated cigarette smuggling in Canada.

TAX RATES ARE STILL MUCH lower in the United States than they were in Canada, but signs of rebellion are already apparent. Contraband cigarettes evading federal taxes made up 6 percent of the total U.S. cigarette market in 1994, up from a negligible level in 1991, according to a preliminary estimate in a new study by Lindquist Avey.

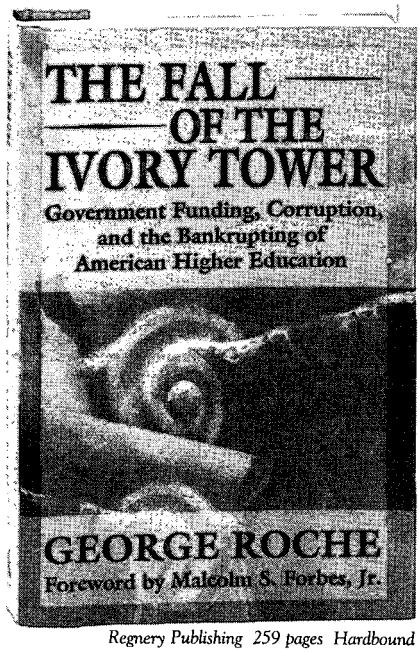
The study suggests that the United States is now at the same stage that Canada was in early 1991, the time at which cigarette smuggling there began to spin out of control. The United States may need just one more significant tax increase to unleash a full-scale revolt.



The study was commissioned by the National Coalition Against Crime and Tobacco Contraband, which is financially backed by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. The coalition also includes other tobacco companies, wholesalers, distributors, and retailers.

Anti-smoking forces dismiss the coalition as a tobacco-industry front group and say its warnings are scare tactics. John Bloom, who works on tobacco-tax issues for the American Cancer Society, says the Lindquist Avey estimate "is just about as believable as the tobacco industry's claim that nicotine isn't addictive." In fact, he argues that "a major federal tax increase would not cause a significant international smuggling problem and would actually reduce what little interstate smuggling that is going on," by reducing the price differential percentage between states.

Nonetheless, international cigarette smuggling appears to be on the rise in the United States. Perhaps the most visible tip-off is what's going on at the Mexican border. The Department of Agriculture estimates that U.S. tobacco companies exported 148.3 million packs to Mexico in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GEORGE ROCHE
Foreword by Malcolm S. Forbes, Jr.

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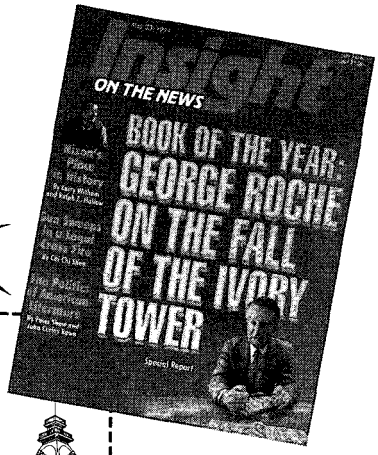

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1994, an increase of 2,424 percent from 1990. As with Canada's exports, it's assumed that the vast majority of these untaxed cigarettes are smuggled back into the United States.

The volume of traffic at border crossings, which has increased since the passage of NAFTA, makes it difficult for U.S. Customs officials to detect smuggled goods—and even then they are looking primarily for illicit drugs, not untaxed cigarettes. Individuals buy untaxed cigarettes at duty-free shops, drive into Mexico, and cross back into the United States. Illegal immigrants commuting to work in Texas sometimes smuggle cigarettes in backpacks, says Kevin Koch, vice president of McLane Company, a cigarette distributor.

BUT AS WAS THE CASE IN CANADA, MOST international cigarette smuggling appears to be controlled by organized crime. Couriers, or "mules," were used by one Los Angeles organization to transport cigarettes from Mexico into California. Until it was raided in July 1994, the ring reportedly was smuggling 7,000 cartons every week.

Organized crime groups have been involved in interstate smuggling for years, but because smokers can easily cross state lines, crime groups account for only a small portion. However, the experience and criminal infrastructure that these groups have developed to evade state taxes is helping them adapt to evading federal cigarette taxes.

The Mafia's smuggling competitors include the increasingly powerful Russian mafia, Mexican rings, and various American Indian organizations.

Cross-border smuggling is especially acute in California. Monte Williams, administrator of the excise tax division of the State Board of Equalization, says smuggling in California "keeps getting worse every month." He estimates that up to 7 percent of the state tobacco market was illegal in 1994 and that the state treasury could lose $50 million as a result.

Many of the for-export-only cigarettes intended for Mexico never make it across the border. Organized crime groups illegally obtain cigarettes from free trade export warehouses along the border, and then forge the paperwork to make it appear that the untaxed cigarettes had been exported.

In the New York City area, for-export cigarettes housed in bonded warehouses or officially loaded onto ships destined for Europe, Asia, or the Middle East have been found in Brooklyn warehouses, according to Paul Rickard of the New York state tax and finance department. Lindquist Avey's Stamler says that it often is less risky for organized crime to divert untaxed cigarettes into New York City from a New Jersey free-trade zone warehouse or other nearby points of entry than to truck cigarettes all the way from North Carolina.

"[Cigarette] smuggling is more profitable than narcotics and less risky," says Det. Lieut. Robert Manes, who heads Michigan's state police Treasury Enforcement Team. With its high cigarette tax and recent history of smuggling cigarettes to Canada, his state appears ripe for a major increase in contraband sales. Right now, says Manes, his team is primarily "trying to gather intelligence."

But early indications suggest that cigarette smuggling in Michigan is growing substantially. Preliminary state treasury figures indicate that cigarette sales have dropped significantly since the tax increase.

Manes says that some of this drop may be due to retailers who stockpiled cigarettes before the tax went into effect. But interstate tax-dodging also seems to be a factor: Ohio and Indiana both report increases in their cigarette sales, especially near the Michigan border. And in Kentucky, where cigarette taxes are $7.20 a carton less than Michigan's, statewide cigarette sales were up 5.7 percent following Michigan's tax increase.

Bill Zeiler of Zeiler's Farm Market in Temperance, Michigan, says that cigarettes used to account for 20 percent to 33 percent of total sales at the store, which is located just across the border from Toledo, Ohio. Since the tax increase, he says, cigarette sales have fallen almost 85 percent.

Zeiler also says that the store is losing more than just cigarette sales: "People would buy [cigarettes] every day or every couple of days, and they'd usually buy something else. Now they're going to Ohio stores to buy those things."

Other Michigan stores are reporting a surge in cigarette-related theft. Jim Garmo, who has run the Galaxy Superstore in Ypsilanti for about 10 years, says he had never suffered any break-ins until the tax increase. Since then, however, Garmo says that his store was burglarized nine times for cigarettes between June and October. And sales have dropped from 1,300 cartons a week to 350 cartons.

ONE REASON WHY CIGARETTE SMUGGLING in the United States is almost certain to keep expanding is that even politicians with reputations as tax-cutters often rely on cigarette tax hikes. Michigan's recent voter-approved increase was part of Republican Gov. John Engler's plan to cut property taxes (See "Engler's Angle," August/September, 1994).

The Republican-controlled Congress is unlikely to increase the federal cigarette tax in the near future, but state taxes continue to rise. Arizona voters narrowly approved a 40-cent-per-pack increase last November to fund indigent health expenses.

Higher cigarette taxes will not only be a disappointment for prohibitionists and tax-starved politicians. If a large increase goes forward in the United States, cigarette smuggling "will make the illicit drug trade look like peanuts by comparison," warns Stamler. With 45 million smokers in the United States, there is a huge potential black market. Organized crime will enter its second golden age.

But more important, Americans will become comfortable with routinely breaking the law and evading taxes. Repeating Canada's experiment in excessive cigarette taxes may well threaten the very fabric of American society. ®

Ed Carson is a staff reporter for REASON.

The President's Apprentices

By Jonathan Marshall

Vocational education's failing grades

AMERICA'S "FORGOTTEN YOUTH," the three quarters of high school students who never complete college, are forgotten no longer. They are now the focus of vigorous White House attention and one of the trendiest movements in education circles: "school-to-work transition" programs.

This upsurge of interest in school-to-work programs began with widespread recognition that non–college-educated workers have fallen into a deep economic pit over the past two decades. From 1973 to 1993, the real hourly wage of male high school graduates plummeted 20 percent. Younger workers did even worse; male high school graduates with one to 15 years of work experience saw their wages dive 30 percent in the same period.

In the conventional wisdom of Education Secretary Richard Riley, American students suffer thus because "we are the only major industrialized nation with no formal system for helping our young people—particularly the 75 percent of high school youth who don't go on to finish a four-year college—make the transition from the classroom to the workplace. That translates to lost productivity and wasted human potential."

School-to-work programs come in many varieties, including youth apprenticeships, co-op programs, and career academies. Before they became so fashionable in the 1990s, they had a more generic name: vocational education. But bland old voc-ed is now hailed as the potential savior of American workers from foreign competition and declining living standards. It is supported with impassioned rhetoric from politicians of both parties and an infusion of $300 million in new federal funds last year.

Yet the clamor at the federal and state levels for revamping vocational education is based on one part research, five parts wishful thinking, and 10 parts political opportunism. The problems they are addressing are real enough, but with their exaggerated claims, government officials are setting up students and educators for a big disappointment.

BILL CLINTON DIDN'T INVENT FEDERAL government support for vocational education; federal cash has flowed to such programs since 1917. Since the early 1980s, Congress has appropriated hundreds of millions of dollars for youth training under the Job Training and Partnership Act. And in 1990, Congress reauthorized the Perkins Act, a $1 billion-a-year program to fund state and local vocational education initiatives.

Despite those programs, Clinton promised that "in our administration, we'll establish a national apprenticeship program, like those in Europe." In his first budget Clinton asked Congress to support a national school-to-work transition program, including youth apprenticeships. The absence of a master blueprint, Labor Secretary Robert Reich declared when legislation was introduced in August 1993, "creates tremendous expense for business and long-term negative consequences for our economy."

The School to Work Opportunities Act, which enjoyed bipartisan support, was signed into law last May. It provides $300 million to help states plan "comprehensive, statewide school-to-work systems," implement programs at the local level, and develop a skills certification system for high school graduates.

Since the act passed, the Departments of Education and Labor have issued a steady stream of grants—and feel-good press releases—to communities all over the country. The money goes to assist partnerships of employers, educators, students, and labor organizations. Yet even officials involved in the new wave of voc-ed concede that it's no revolutionary advance.

"The School to Work Opportunities Act is in the same mold as the Perkins Act," says David Boesel, head of the National Assessment of Vocational Education in the Department of Education's research office. "A lot of discussion and work is going on right now to decide what the relation between the two acts is and how they can be brought closer together. There is no answer yet to the question of how they differ."

Both acts aim to integrate academic and vocational education to help students who have trouble grasping abstract concepts. The theory is that schools should offer non–academic track students enough academic instruction to broaden their minds and keep open their college options, while gearing teaching to practical tasks. Shaping curricula around a particular occupational interest and providing related job experience should in theory provide students with marketable skills and an incentive to stay in school.

MODERN VOC-ED PROGRAMS TAKE SEVeral forms. Cooperative education usually combines morning classes with afternoon jobs that earn students credits toward graduation as well as pay and work experience. The marketing education co-op program at Pennington, New Jersey's Hopewell Valley Central High School, for example, gives seniors work experience in various retail and service industries. As of 1993, about 450,000 high school juniors and seniors nationwide, about 8 percent of the total, were enrolled in such programs.

Tech prep programs coordinate high school and community college curricula to encourage a smooth transition into

higher education, usually in a vocationally oriented technical field. In Tulsa, Vo-Tech High School and the local community college offer a combined four-year program in metalworking. About 90,000 students across the country now follow such a track.

Career academies, a hot trend, are schools-within-schools that offer an intimate learning environment, a positive peer culture, and occupational themes, such as computers or health care. Using local employers as mentors, they blend academic and practical training into a unified whole. Nationwide, only about 9,000 students attend 150 such academies, but their number is growing fast. Philadelphia, with 25 academies in 16 high schools, is home to the idea, but California, Florida, and the District of Columbia are also making them the focus of school restructuring efforts.

Oakland Tech's Health and Bioscience Academy offers 200 students a three-year exposure to those fields, including field trips, guest speakers from industry, and paid summer internships in local hospitals. Targeting middle and low achievers in mostly minority Oakland, California, this highly regarded program draws special funding from the federal and state government, the city of Oakland, the school district, and foundations. To accommodate extra staff and smaller class sizes, some career academies cost as much as $1,500 more per student than average school costs.

There is no shortage of anecdotal testimonials to the value of such efforts. One student at the Media Academy in San Francisco's Fremont High School, which trains students for media careers, told the *San Francisco Chronicle* that he was using his knowledge of TV production to work part time at KDOL-TV, channel 13. Without the academy's training, he said, "I'd just be hanging out after school and wouldn't have hope for the future. I'd just be lost."

Anecdotes aside, no one yet has proof that academies or similar innovations make much measurable difference to students' educational or job-market performance, much less that they are cost effective. A massive synthesis of research published this year by the Department of Education concluded that despite wide gaps in our knowledge, "One thing is clear, however: the research does *not* show that secondary vocational students have a clear, consistent, and sizable labor market advantage over general track students....We must conclude that, for most participants, neither program is working very well."

Studies show, for example, that California academy students, at least initially, had better attendance, took more course credits, had higher grade point averages, and failed fewer courses than other students of similar background. But those effects were strongest in the first year and disappeared by the third, according to a report issued to Congress last year by the National Assessment of Vocational Education. Nor did graduates appear to reap any benefits. "Followup studies of graduates of two [Bay Area] academies and comparison students 27 months later found no significant differences in labor market outcomes such as employment status, wages, or hours worked," it noted.

For all the handwringing in Washington, America's lack of a "formal system" for training youth may be a strength, not a weakness. American youth engage in a sometimes frustrating, sometimes wasteful, but on the whole highly productive search for the right match between their tastes and skills and available jobs.

The same report indicated that vocational students who find a job in their field of study do tend to enjoy higher pay after graduation than those who follow a general education track. "Unfortunately," it added, "less than 40 percent of secondary graduates are able to find a job that matches their training, limiting benefits to a fairly small group." And there is no way of knowing from current studies whether those who did find a job in their field of study really benefited from their vocational training, or were simply better motivated to begin with.

In its strongest favorable conclusion, the assessment office reported that "on balance, vocational education seems to reduce dropout rates, but we do not regard the issue as closed." And even that effect, if real, is of uncertain significance. "Some students have told us they were staying in school because vocational education offered them an easier alternative than academics and because it required no homework," the report cautioned.

One study of career academies in California cited by the report found a significantly lower dropout rate among its students than among similar students in the general school population. But these results are disputed by Stanford University education economist Henry Levin—who notes that one school accounted for most of the reduction in dropouts. "That tells me there may be something idiosyncratic about the situation since you don't find consistent results. That troubles me, given that I've seen these results strewn all over the literature."

Similarly, a major study of the Job Training Partnership Act by Abt Associates, issued by the Labor Department last year, found no payoff to training youth; indeed, males lost ground compared to those who did not undergo the training and earnings of participating male youth with an arrest record fell 22 percent behind their peers in a control group. "Unfortunately, there is little available evidence to suggest alternative program strategies that might work better, especially for youths," the report concluded.

The reality is that disadvantaged youth —those most likely to drop out, perform poorly in school, and take menial jobs—are hard to reach with any program by the

time they reach adolescence. "I think upgrading dropout skill levels is an uphill battle," said Department of Education economist Nabeel Alsalam. "They leave school because they aren't getting much out of it. People don't know what kinds of institutions or help works for these people."

NOR HAVE OTHER COUNTRIES FOUND A magic solution to these problems, despite having "comprehensive" school-to-work programs lauded by the Clinton administration. Germany, with its national system of training and certifying apprentices in 377 specific occupations, is often held up as a model. But Syracuse University economist Kenneth Couch, author of the only available study of the earnings of young German apprenticeship graduates, found that they made no more money on average than ordinary high school graduates five to 14 years after their certification. "People who say going to apprenticeships will solve our problems have done absolutely no research using data to prove that people who go through them will have better outcomes in any dimension," he said. Couch concludes that "emulating the German approach may in fact give us an education system that will not perform better but will cost more than our current one."

Another set of researchers, James Witte and Arne Kalleberg at the University of North Carolina, dispute the assumption that German apprentices move seamlessly from school to the jobs for which they have intensively trained for two to three years at an average cost of $8,300 per year. Only about half of apprentices end up taking jobs that fit their costly training, they found. For example, Witte said, many bakery apprentices end up working for Ford Motor Company.

One of the great attractions of the apprenticeship system to German companies is cheap labor, says Peter Harf, CEO of John H. Benckiser, one of Europe's largest consumer companies. Firms can pay an apprentice cook $4.07 an hour to sweep and clean when an unskilled non-apprentice cleaning person would cost them $12 an hour. Germany, like the United States, is experiencing a growing gap between high school- and college-educated workers. For less-educated American workers, he said, the problem "is not a need for the training of mid-level skills, but rather a lack of comportment. These skills are imparted as early as kindergarten and not in the ninth grade when students are making choices between vocational or academic education."

FOR ALL THE HANDWRINGING IN WASHington, America's lack of a "formal system" for training youth may be a strength, not a weakness. American youth engage in a sometimes frustrating, sometimes wasteful, but on the whole highly productive search for the right match between their tastes and skills and available jobs. They switch jobs several times before they are 30, usually enjoying substantial wage gains in the process. They often return to school at local community colleges or technical institutes to upgrade their skills or try out new fields. In a fluid job market, where employer demands are changing constantly, specific job training in their teen years may be wasted. Studies show that developing general skills and cognitive ability, rather than narrow vocational education, helps students perform better on the job and in further education.

The reality is that disadvantaged youth—those most likely to drop out, perform poorly in school, and take menial jobs—are hard to reach with any program by the time they reach adolescence.

"We argue that much specific training ought to be postponed to the post-secondary level," says Boesel. "We really want to emphasize getting as many students prepared for and participating in postsecondary education as possible. That's where the heavier benefits are likely to be found. We can't work miracles with students who stop with a high school degree."

It's time to broadcast that message loud and clear: There is no cheap and easy salvation for young, low-skilled workers. Sending more young people on to higher education will be extremely expensive. Large returns require large investments of both time and money. University of Chicago labor economist James Heckman estimates that at current rates of return to education and training, it could take an investment of $1.6 trillion to reverse the loss of pay suffered by low-skilled American workers since 1979.

Given those stakes, it would make sense to find out first which programs work best at developing skills and motivating students. And knowledge is slowly accumulating, starting with the admirably critical synthesis published this year by the National Assessment of Vocational Education. Other useful studies are underway. The California legislature, which launched a major career academies push in 1985, voted in 1992 to study their effectiveness using a rigorous and all-too-rare experimental design that will allow valid comparisons between treatment and control groups. The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation has taken on the task but will not issue a final report until 2002.

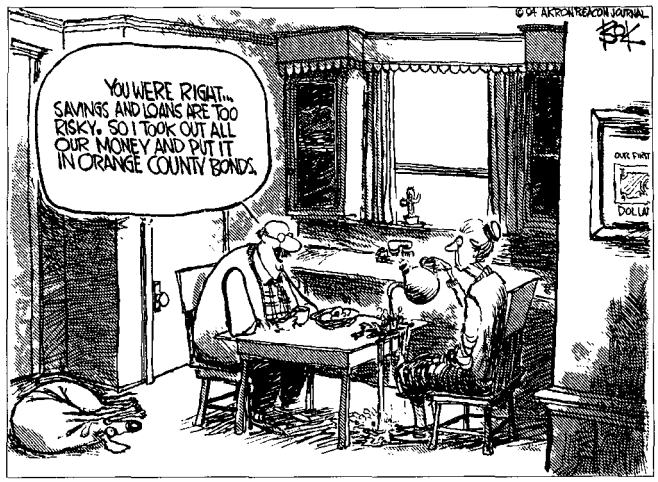
Many legislators are understandably loathe to await the results before launching expensive new programs that promise to make the world a better place. But as a 1992 report by the National Research Council noted, "Without high-quality and credible evaluations, school districts will never be able to choose wisely among available innovations." And squandering billions of dollars hardly supports the message that schools hope to instill in youth: that knowledge is a precondition to individual and social advancement. ®

Contributing Editor Jonathan Marshall is economics editor of the San Francisco Chronicle.

Red Ink Blues

By Harold Johnson

Will bankruptcy force Orange County to act like Orange County?


©'94 AKRON BEACON JOURNAL
YOU WERE RIGHT... SAVINGS AND LOANS ARE TOO RISKY. SO I TOOK OUT ALL OUR MONEY AND PUT IT IN ORANGE COUNTY BONDS.
OUR FIRST DOLLAR

ORANGE COUNTY. FOR the self-respecting liberal, the very name provokes a shudder. This sun-caressed Southern California expanse is, after all, the birthplace and final resting place of Richard Nixon. One of the few counties of any size, anywhere, to go for Goldwater. And the symbolic suburban heartland of Reaganism: Its voters, more than any others, helped propel the host of *Death Valley Days* to political stardom.

In America's political shorthand, the county's name has become a code phrase to describe a don't-mess-in-my-wallet mindset that admirers style libertarian, but sentinels of government deride as self-centered (as in, "How Orange County of you," said with a sneer).

Little wonder, then, that in the wake of Orange County's bankruptcy—the county is the largest government entity ever to enter Chapter 9—much of the media has seized on the debacle to try to discredit what the county is supposed to represent. Reaganism's sins are being visited on its children, runs the line. We're told that dread '80s-style "excesses" were on display in the Nathan Detroit–like investment practices of County Treasurer Bob Citron—as if Gamblin' Bob maintained a hotline to Ron and Nancy's Bel Air digs. The fact that Citron was the lone Democrat to hold a countywide elective office gets reported, but isn't allowed to soften the sermon.

Derivatives, complex financial securities that Citron employed, are tagged as culprits as well, and media calls for regulation win an ear even in the newly ascendant House Republican caucus. As it happens, the real daredevilism in the Citron strategy wasn't the investment vehicles but the leveraging. The county and many of the scores of local jurisdictions that invested with it borrowed big time in an effort to enhance their winnings. They didn't need derivatives to bet on interest rates with borrowed money; they just happened to use them. No matter: In a lot of the reporting, that fact isn't allowed to divert attention from the alleged need to crack down on innovative financial instruments.

For many journalists, Mr. Citron's sins pale next to those of the real heavies: Orange County taxpayers. They're tightwads, you see—all me, me, me. It's because they weren't surrendering enough of their take-home loot to local government that dedicated public servants had to resort to financial risk to make ends meet.

Columnist James O. Goldsborough of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* has the lyrics down well: "Citron, I believe, happened to Orange County because of the funny philosophy up there that government is bad, that taxes that go for good government are worse...."

Los Angeles Times economics writer James Flanigan fingers a "screwed up" tax system that starves the public sector: "One reason city managers were so unquestioning of the exaggerated returns in...[the] Orange County investment fund is that they needed the money."

Mark Lacter of the L.A. *Daily News* gives miserly Orange Countians a drubbing: "[T]he most remarkable aspect of the Orange County bond mess is how little they talk about raising taxes. Which is, of course, the one thing they should be talking about, at least as a stop-gap effort to generate some quick cash and avoid draconian cuts. What is it with those folks? How far can their tax-busting attitudes reach?"

Proposition 13, which was birthed in Orange County, is, as always, hauled in for blame. Its mild, porous restraints on tax increases helped trigger a "crisis in local government finance," reports *USA Today*.

Bracing rhetoric, no question. All that's lacking is a firm link with the facts. Mr. Goldsborough, for instance, apparently forgets that the sales tax in his own San Diego County, currently at 7 percent, stands a full 10 percent lower than the 7.75 percent levy in Scroogish Orange County.

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH IS THAT TAX dollars have been pouring into Orange County coffers with monsoon intensity for years. If local public servants still found themselves with cash-flow problems, it's because of their Niagara-force spending habits.

Two recent studies of taxing and government check-writing, one from Pepperdine University, the other from the California Taxpayers Association, lay it all out. Cal-Tax reports that revenues to Orange County—including all local taxes

CHIP BOK

and fees—rocketed skyward over the past decade and a half, from $369 million in 1978 (the year Prop. 13 darkened the horizon) to $723.9 million in 1993.

Even when you adjust for inflation and population growth, the county's income has been rising. Revenue—in constant 1992 dollars—increased from $527 per person in 1978 to $623 a person 14 years later.

This robust expansion wasn't enough to appease bureaucratic appetites. Gary M. Galles, associate professor of economics at Pepperdine, charts an increase of more than 50 percent in county spending from 1978 through 1989, even with inflation and population growth factored in.

Juicy examples of spendthriftery abound: unneeded real-estate acquisitions, the usual generous auto allowances and other pampering of top officials, fevered payroll growth (a 45-percent increase in the number of county employees over the past decade, to nearly 18,000 today). This past summer, when county supervisors approved the addition of more than 900 new positions—even as the recession-wracked local economy was undergoing another spasm of contraction—the Orange County *Register* protested editorially. In response, County Administrative Officer Ernie Schneider accused the paper's editorial staff of residing in a "mausoleum," so out of touch were we with the need for expanded "services." And officials have shown a notable lack of interest in privatization and other economy measures that you'd think would thrive in a county of such conservative repute.

THE DIRTY LITTLE SECRET, YOU SEE, IS that Orange County's reputation as a free-enterprise, small-government citadel simply isn't borne out when you look at local government. Yes, voters send stalwarts of the right to Sacramento and to Congress; the legislative delegation has been derided—or hailed—as the capital's "cavemen," while congressional representatives include such give-no-quarter conservatives as Bob Dornan, Dana Rohrabacher, Chris Cox, Ed Royce, and, until recently, William Dannemeyer. But it's a different story with the people who tend the political hearthfires back home. While practically everyone answers to the name Republican, that's rather like a Brit identifying himself as "Church of England": The tent is more sprawling than Ringling Brothers' and, for that reason, more of a circus.

The divide in the GOP between aggressive skeptics of big government and status-quo huggers is writ large in this most Republican of counties. Many local or county elected officials would make comfy chums for Bill or Hillary or other cheerleaders for government growth. At the very least they regard George Bush's benevolent attitude toward taxes and regulations as the very model of good governance. Outgoing GOP County Supervisor Harriett Wieder actually endorsed Clinton, while her colleague Tom Riley has backed a stream of liberal primary opponents to right-wing legislators and congressmen. Wieder, Riley, and the rest of the supes gave Citron their high fives during his re-election race last June, while the county's legislative and congressional delegations got behind Republican challenger John Moorlach, a CPA who warned that the treasurer's investment bubble was about to pop.

The dirty little secret is that Orange County's reputation as a free-enterprise, small-government citadel simply isn't borne out when you look at local government. While practically everyone answers to the name Republican, that's rather like a Brit identifying himself as "Church of England."

In part, the county's political schizophrenia is a reflection of the kind of people who, in any community, are most drawn toward local office—those who believe in government and yearn to sit at the control board. But public ignorance and apathy play a large role, too. While Dornan and Dannemeyer are household names, 56 percent of residents couldn't identify a single county leader, according to a recent poll.

The large silver lining in the financial fiasco is that it is prodding people out of slumber. County officials who have been able to operate underneath the radar suddenly find themselves, and their managerial deficiencies, bathed in klieg lights. The scope of the fiscal dilemma—a $2 billion loss in the investment fund's value, translating into an operating deficit of at least $170 million this year—also offers a wonderful opportunity for the county finally to square its reality with its reputation, by serving Ultra Slim Fast to government bureaucracies.

With a popular groundswell of opposition to any new taxes, and talk of recall in the air, nervous supervisors show unaccustomed interest in strategies for dieting, devolving, contracting out. Payroll cuts are already under way. There's even talk that the county's airport—named for the celluloid saint of rugged individualism, John Wayne—might be sold or leased.

The Lincoln Club, an influential group of GOP donors, has commissioned the Reason Foundation's Robert Poole to do a top-to-bottom review and offer a blueprint for a reinvented county government. "Orange County has the chance to be a test tube for the 21st-century model of a rationalized, downsized public sector," says Lincoln Club member Howard Klein.

The forces of inertia, of course, haven't been routed, but the potential for a change is greater than any time in memory. And the battle charge has a stirring ring: At long last, let Orange County be Orange County. R

Harold Johnson is an editorial writer at the Orange County Register, *and a contributing editor of* National Review West.

Epic Burnout

By Charles Oliver

More power to film makers can be a pain in the butt to audiences.

Arnold Schwarzenegger takes a break during one of many gunfights in the 141-minute long 1994 blockbuster, *True Lies*.

TWO HOURS INTO THE KEVIN Costner film *Wyatt Earp*, I wondered if it would ever end. Over an hour later, it did.

One of the most conspicuous trends in movies over the past three years has been the increasing number of very long films: *Wyatt Earp*, 181 minutes; *Wolf*, 125 minutes; *Clear and Present Danger*, 141 minutes; *True Lies*, 141 minutes; *Renaissance Man*, 129 minutes; *Being Human*, 125 minutes; and *Color of Night*, 121 minutes.

Going back over the past couple of years, we find other examples: *The Bodyguard*, 130 minutes; *Malcolm X*, 201 minutes; *Scent of a Woman*, 157 minutes; *Chaplin*, 144 minutes; *Hoffa*, 140 minutes; and *Lorenzo's Oil*, 135 minutes. There are many others. Todd McCarthy, a critic for the show business trade publication *Variety*, pointed out this trend three years ago. At that time, he noted, "Now, I automatically perk up upon learning that a film runs just 89 minutes." Today, a movie that short still stands out from the pack.

Most critics who have commented on this trend toward longer movies suggest that film makers today just don't know how to make a tightly focused movie. There's some validity to this argument, but the key factor behind bloated, lengthy films is the increasing economic power of the talent behind them.

When is a long movie too long? Traditionally, theaters have preferred a 90-minute running time. Anything more cuts down on their ability to clear out the theaters and clean up between screenings. Lengths much greater than 90 minutes force theaters to eliminate screenings. A 90-minute film can be shown six times on one full day of screenings. A three-hour film such as *Wyatt Earp* can be shown only three times on one screen on one working day.

But for the purposes of this article, I'll use a more elusive concept of length. Namely, a film is too long when it isn't tightly focused, when scenes could be cut, when it feels padded. As Harry Cohn, the longtime head of Columbia Pictures, once said, "When my butt begins to hurt, the movie is too long."

Judged by this criteria, *Schindler's List* was fine at 195 minutes. At 120 minutes, *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York* could have been seriously trimmed. And even at a mere 87 minutes *North* was way, way too long.

Now, in some of the instances we have mentioned, the length of the film was a deliberate decision. *Wyatt Earp* and *Malcolm X* were supposed to be epics. Yet their stories ultimately did not support the length imposed upon them. At some point, this should have been pointed out to the films' creators. But most of the films listed above were not explicitly trying for epic stature. They were just flabby.

IN THE SO-CALLED GOLDEN AGE OF HOLLYwood film making, the business of movie making was a study in vertical integration. Large theater chains owned the major studios. And these studios locked up the major talent with long-term contracts. They were the only game in town, and they exercised tight control over film makers.

If an actor balked at playing a role assigned by the studio, he could be loaned out to the small independent studios, banished to the world of cheap serials and B movies. Or worse, he might be suspended, unable to work and receiving no pay.

Directors often did not have any input into the writing of scripts. They sometimes did not even see them until the day they were to start shooting them. Nor did they have the right to determine the final shape of their films. In fact, they often were not even allowed into the editing rooms where what they had shot was shaped into a film. By that time, the director might be off shooting another movie.

This system was geared toward tight films. Not only because that is what theaters, the ultimate owners in this system, preferred to show, but also because that was what maximized the use of resources. Tighter scripts meant tighter shooting schedules. This in turn allowed studios to rush actors from film to film, amortizing their yearly salaries over several movies.

Off the top of my head, I looked up several films from this era in a movie reference book. Their running times were: *The Public Enemy*, 84 minutes; *Red Dust*, 83 minutes; *The Bride of Frankenstein*, 75 minutes; *The Champ*, 87 minutes; and *Flying Down to Rio*, 89 minutes.

But in 1947, the U.S. government busted up the old studio system, forcing the studios to divorce themselves from the theater chains. In addition, television began to draw away a large portion of the cinema audience. Soon the studios could not profitably maintain the contract system. Eventually, actors, directors, and writers became free agents bargaining with studios on per-film employment.

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

One of the ways that Hollywood responded to those developments was with the production of huge spectacle films that television couldn't emulate. The theaters of the 1950s were filled with epics such as *Quo Vadis*, *The Ten Commandments*, and *Ben-Hur*.

These films were huge in every respect, running well over two hours each and having casts of thousands. At first audiences responded enthusiastically, but as time wore on, size alone was no longer a drawing card. Such epics, with their huge budgets, became riskier projects. And the failure of *Cleopatra*, which nearly destroyed 20th Century Fox in 1963, brought this cycle of films to an end.

BUT AN EVEN MORE PROFOUND PROCESS was taking place, little noticed by movie goers. Behind the scenes in Hollywood, power was slowly but steadily shifting toward the creative elements of film.

At first, though, this didn't make that much difference in the making of films. Studios were still about the only game in town when it came to financing movies, and they were also about the only ones with national distribution systems. So there was still some balance between the business and creative elements; there was some check on artists.

If one looks at the non-spectacle films of the 1950s, one finds that they generally were well-edited and well under two hours in length. Again, picking a few movies at random, I found *Father of the Bride* was 93 minutes, *Cheaper By the Dozen* 85 minutes, and *Cinderella* 74 minutes. More to the point, at whatever length, the movies of this era generally don't seem flabby.

Jumping ahead to the late 1960s, I found some movies slipping when it came to simple length. For example, *The Graduate* was 105 minutes, *Easy Rider* was 94 minutes, and *Midnight Cowboy* was 113 minutes. But again, I dare anyone to find many major studio releases from this era that really fail the Cohn tired butt test.

But in the 1980s, the economics of film making began to change. Videotapes and premium cable channels became viable sources of revenue, making film makers less reliant upon the theater box office for their profits. A host of new media companies sprang up to try to capture these revenues. In addition, privatization and liberalization of media in Europe and other foreign countries revitalized their industries. Those newly empowered companies looked to Hollywood for product for their pipelines.

All of those companies started bidding for the services of star actors, directors, producers, and writers. That demand was expressed in the rapidly escalating salaries for those people. But the creative elements also saw their pay go up in another, less obvious way: They demanded greater control over their product. Top directors and producers now routinely demand, and get, final cut—the right to determine the ultimate shape of a film—as part of their contracts.

If one looks at the long films listed at the beginning of this article, it is quickly apparent that most of them were made by directors with big successes in their past. *True Lies*, for example, was by James Cameron, the director of the enormously successful *Terminator 2* and *Aliens*.

Indeed, Cameron's career is a good example of how a director's increasing clout can affect the length of his films. His first feature was *Piranha II: The Spawning* at 88 minutes. Then came *The Terminator*, 108 minutes. Since then, he hasn't done a film less than 138 minutes long. On the other hand, those films that are made by some of Hollywood's lesser lights—such as *Cool Runnings*, *Candyman*, or *Benny & Joon*—still tend to come in closer to 90 minutes than two hours in length.

Some have even taken advantage of the money flowing into Hollywood to form their own production companies and truly take control of their careers. Rob Reiner, for instance, was one of the founders of Castle Rock, the movie production company recently purchased by Ted Turner. Cameron formed his own company, in part with foreign backing, to retain ownership of his films. As owners, directors obviously have greater control over their final product.

BUT EVEN WHERE CONTROL OVER THE FINAL shape of the film does not explicitly belong to a director or producer, if he has a good record, he still has a lot of leverage. As I noted above, *Home Alone 2* was 120 minutes. This film would have been tighter and more geared to the attention spans of its target audience of children at 90 minutes. But the first *Home Alone*, from the same creative team, grossed something like $200 million. Given that past success, a movie studio might have figured they ought to trust the instincts of the film makers, or alternatively, they may have just been unwilling to jeopardize a successful relationship by criticizing them over a product that would still make money.

Of course, the world of film isn't the only place where such things happen. I defy anyone to read Stephen King's last few novels, bloated works all, and tell me that the man isn't lightly edited. Successful writers may still need a strong editor, but they may not always have one. And this raises an interesting point: Does length really matter, or more accurately, is conciseness really a virtue? After all, Stephen King's novels continue to sell well, even if some of us think they would be much improved if shortened. And some of the films that have been criticized for their overlength—*True Lies*, for example—have been quite successful at the box office.

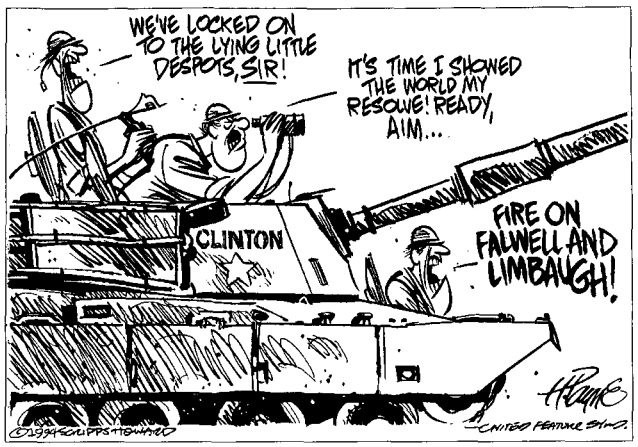
The truth is that within certain limits an audience will tolerate a certain slackness in a movie, or book, that they otherwise like. Alternatively, if someone dislikes a movie, the thought that it could have been several minutes shorter isn't likely to impress him. Critics may rail, cineastes may carp, but we are about the only people likely to leave a movie saying, "That was pretty good, but 10 minutes could have been cut from the third act." R

Contributing Editor Charles Oliver is a reporter for Investor's Business Daily.

Rush to Judgment

By Thomas W. Hazlett

Limbaugh's secret sauce


WE'VE LOCKED ON TO THE LYING LITTLE DESPOTS, SIR!
IT'S TIME I SHOWED THE WORLD MY RESOLVE! READY, AIM...
CLINTON
FIRE ON FALWELL AND LIMBAUGH!
HENRY PAYNE
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UNITED FEATURE SYND.

BY SOME COINCIDENCE OF nature I moved to Sacramento, California, in the very same month—September 1984—that another American, also fascinated by politics and critical of liberal orthodoxy, did. He was just one-and-a-half years my senior, and we became friends. We enjoyed many chats about life, public policy, politics, economics, and women. I met his family, he met some of mine. And then in 1988 he moved to New York City where he became the most famous political commentator in America: Rush Limbaugh.

It is amusing to read journalists report on a person one knows, all the more so when the reporting is biting, tendentious, and ambitious. It is interesting to actually see both sides of a controversy: Rush is a walking controversy. It is annoying to know someone so famous that a good deal of my mail and telephone traffic is composed of messages from people (from French-Canadian businessmen to congressmen to women seeking courtship) trying to "get some information to Rush."

Now I see, as reported in *The Washington Post* by Jack Anderson, that the gurus who brought us ClintonCare and a Republican Congress have dedicated themselves to promoting a left-wing Rush. This is a sensational window into the thinking of the Clinton brain trust, a term that has more political than biological significance. In their view, devastating Democratic losses are simply the result of...nasty comments on talk radio.

The rise of Limbaugh is a phenomenal experiment in the consumer economics of broadcast markets. Rush was not plucked out of an Ivy League school and placed at the pinnacle of political debate in America by the networks, the *Times*, or the *Post*. He dropped out of college only one semester in. He bounced around in a disc jockey's chair for most of the next two decades and was fortunate to grab a chance at a Sacramento talk-radio outlet when he was well into his 30s. It was likely his last chance in show biz.

What propelled Limbaugh? Ratings. Somehow, Rush got tons of people to spin that dial to KFBK, 1530 on the AM dial. But did any national network or syndication snatch him up? Nay. No one would touch him. Too controversial. Too right-wing. Too opinionated. Too...never went to Harvard.

The makeshift distribution chain that put Limbaugh on 55 radio stations in August 1988 was entirely ad hoc—and people tuned in en masse. Now, with 650 stations and 22 million weekly listeners, Limbaugh is the King of Talk. He went on TV in September 1992, and ratings are similarly amazing, as his ragtag syndication pulls in viewer numbers rivaling Jay Leno's—which are backed by the National Broadcasting Corporation.

This is the audience talking, but all the Clinton *wunderkinder* hear is Limbaugh's rant. It haunts them, and they know: If they could just get their own mouthpiece, all their Great Plans would succeed and the people would love them! But liberals roam talk radio: Michael Jackson of Los Angeles's KABC failed in heavily marketed national syndication by ABC Radio just before Limbaugh's Excellence in Broadcasting launched. Jim Hightower, Gloria Allred, Jerry Brown, and Tom Leykis spit their anti-Republican venom daily. But where are the numbers?

WHAT THE WHITE HOUSE does not understand, and will not understand even after I explain it to them, is that the key to Rush's success is the very totem they insist on dragging out to save themselves. It is the liberal media dandies off whom Rush plays, whom he mocks with unending glee and merciless buffoonery. There have been other conservative talk-show hosts. But Rush—each and every time he takes to the air—gives the listener some politics and a bonus: He sticks his finger in a liberal's eye.

He does it not by meanness, as the clueless wine-and-cheese crowd whines. He does it by joyously celebrating the existence of an alternative medium—his parallel universe—where the prevailing pieties of the liberal elite carry no weight whatever. The condescension of the elites is Rush's launch pad. He blasts off at the very moment his show begins, bellowing that his is the "only information superhighway you'll ever need."

The boastfulness strikes much deeper than the liberals will ever know. When Rush barks that listeners tune only to him, "because I'll tell you everything you need to know, and I'll tell you what to think about it to boot!," the anguished White House monitors and their electorally challenged minions cry that legions of mindless "dittoheads" are taking their orders from a talk-show lunatic.

In fact, Limbaugh is sparking a huge reaction by mimicking the very liberals who decry him: This is Rush's impersonation of the all-powerful network news anchorperson, saying out loud what is the subtext in any of the auspiciously introduced and expensively produced national news shows. Their rectitude, their certainty, their values spark Rush's counterattitude. He's just as cocksure, and he's actually honest about his edge. It is a spoof, and the spoofees don't get it. Ha, ha, ha!

When Rush screams, "I *am* equal time," he is not merely responding to the proponents of the Fairness Doctrine. He is revealing whence he came, out of the belly of the beast. It is against the backdrop of a news media obsessed with the tragedy of American life, fascinated by the do-gooders of government, bent on giving shortshrift to the decency and hope which the American Dream has inspired, that Rush Limbaugh roars. The sanctimony of your typical news story about homelessness, racism, poverty, AIDS, crime, the environment, schools, taxes—the sappy subtext that says, "I, the muckraking reporter who knows so much more than the complacent uncaring middle-class bigots whom I will soon expose, am here to set this country straight about its priorities"—triggers the wildly enthusiastic response, and the huge numbers for Limbaugh. The Ditto Master explodes the taboo, saying aloud what the liberals whisper between the lines—while expecting those they scorn to remain politely seated.

THE POP CULTURE, WHICH ORDINARY Americans both enjoy and despise, rails against middle-class values. In billboards in Northern California now advertising the excitement of the snowy slopes of the High Sierras, a ski resort pictures various men in before and after shots. Before, they are well groomed and look b-o-r-i-n-g. After, they have long hair, are unshaven, wear really cool shades, and appear to be having the time of their lives. It has become a truism that the hard-working, play-by-the-rules fellow is a sap, and that his life will ultimately amount to no more than the death of a salesman.

The working man is displaced as society's hero. As Patrick Moynihan has noted, the culture has "defined deviancy down," raising many who make little or no effort to conform to civilized standards to an exalted social status—that of victim. This is offensive to those who see their schools, tax base, neighborhoods, and daily lives made less palatable by such a reordering. And just to polish off that hard-working chump, as Charles Krauthammer alertly chimes in, the culture has also "defined deviancy up," meaning that the middle class is accused of more crimes than ever before. Wife beating is said (erroneously) to skyrocket on Super Bowl Sunday; divorce skirmishes routinely result in child-abuse charges; the business owner is subject to myriad social regulations that—when inevitably crossed—criminalize the act of producing output to be consumed by one's fellow man. Oops! I said, "fellow *man*." Guilty!

The mainstream media dutifully report such "news" to those who work, parent, build, and pay taxes. Dressing up stories with attractive, articulate newspeople and extravagant production values, the old-line news outlets consider the common people incapable of conscious consideration of the underlying subtext. But those who are nagged and scolded for causing homelessness and poverty and a pitifully underfunded government tend to figure out quite a lot, given time.

Rush is middle-class revenge. He speaks their language, harbors their hopes, believes in their values. He tears through CompuServe to pin down those news stories that reveal the wildest excesses of the politically correct, the most abusive hectoring or denigration of middle-class values. He regales his audience with tales featuring average Americans who buck elitist prejudices to do something great in the marketplace where the country's workers live and dream. (Rush's favorite fable: the rise of Rush Limbaugh to fame and fortune.)

When he is bitterly attacked as a maniac, a hatemonger, or a bigot, it raises his ratings through the roof. Not because he is such things but because he is not, and because his listeners know it. Rush can err factually or philosophically (and we have talked, to good effect, on the former and debated, to good effect, on the latter). But he is not of the lunatic fringe.

Those who place him there are suckered. The litmus test they think they're inflicting is a reverse test which they publicly flunk, oblivious to their score. When the White House bellyaches about Rush's talk-radio forum as mindless, or jokes that he is a racist, the Clintonites signal the marketplace that they, too, are among the enlightened few who know that middle-class attitudes are beyond the pale of decency. This is not exactly where a popularly elected president should strive to be. But it is precisely where Rush Limbaugh flourishes, having the president of the United States as his publicity agent.

Bill's White House geniuses want to create yet another liberal face for Rush to be in. This is a little too generous, given how Bill and Hillary have already boosted Rush's platform several miles higher.

What the Clintonites really need are some slick, arrogant *conservatives*, perhaps as network news anchors—perhaps three or four. They need a public that has been subjected to incessant holier-than-thou lecturing from the Moral Majority or the American Legion or the National Rifle Association. The need to move Pat Robertson from the *700 Club* to *ABC World News Tonight*. Liberals need to become outsiders again. Then they might lob their missiles at the smug and smarmy establishment—and actually hit someone other than themselves.

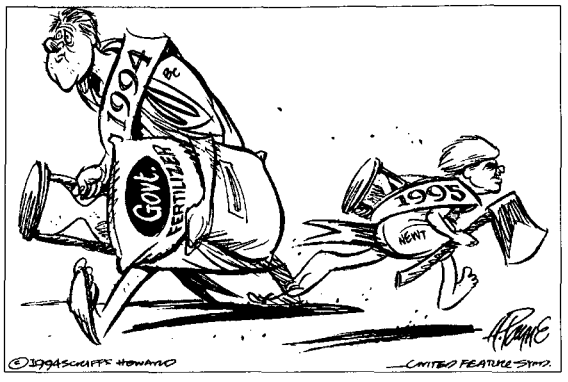
As his troops march home from the desert, chuckling, Limbaugh excites an esprit de corps in his audience. Now the Clintonites, if they are to regain their edge, must wander on the outs awhile. The administration's first two years seem like a pretty good start. ®

Contributing Editor Thomas W. Hazlett teaches economics and public policy at the University of California, Davis.

In with the Newt

By Carolyn Lochhead

The first Republican week



FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE Krushchev replaced Stalin, Republicans on January 4 took control of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Capitol seemed transported to a different planet.

The formerly wretched and scorned ascended to the chairs of the great committees and began dictating free-market agendas once dismissed as ridiculous and unworthy of notice. Their leaders took over the ornate offices of the Capitol itself, like Goths inside the gates of Rome.

The new House majority leader, former economics professor Dick Armey, could be seen standing outside before a bank of television cameras quoting at length from Thomas Sowell.

In the House, Minority Leader Richard Gephardt passed the gavel to Newt Gingrich. Republicans roared with jubilation, and the front page of *The Washington Post* declared, "The Berlin Wall of American politics came tumbling down."

The legislative machinery on Capitol Hill suddenly shifted into reverse. Instead of the Family and Medical Leave Act—the first major bill passed by the previous Congress, requiring employers to grant special time off—Congress took up a measure to stop unfunded federal mandates on state and local governments.

Where last year Washington labored on a health-care program to take over a seventh of the U.S. economy, now it is pushing through the Contract with America, a 10-point blueprint of unapologetic conservatism. Reporters now treat the contract as seriously as they once treated health care, inquiring about regulatory cost-benefit analysis as they once detailed the intricacies of health alliances.

At the House Ways and Means Committee, which oversees taxes and entitlements, free marketeer William Archer took the chair long held by Chicago Democrat Dan Rostenkowski, defeated in November. Archer said he wants to abolish the income tax.

A Senate Banking Committee hearing on financial derivatives, blamed for the Orange County fiscal collapse, would normally have launched major regulatory backlash. Instead, the panel declared no need for further regulation. "Don't blame financial markets for the bad judgment on the part of participants in that market," said Sen. Phil Gramm, another former economics professor.

Over in the Senate Government Affairs Committee, Chairman William Roth employed tactics long honed by Democrats at committee hearings: lining up heaps of favorable witnesses first and leaving an opponent or two speaking to empty hearing rooms in the late afternoon.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici vowed at a press conference to abolish 100 federal programs. "Why do you all look so gloomy?" Domenici asked reporters. "We're going to have a revolution in your thinking too."

Republican governors met with the new leadership and announced plans for an unprecedented transfer of welfare programs, including AFDC cash assistance, back to the states. Reporters mobbed the Republican governors afterwards, smelling power like range cattle smell water, and scrambling over chairs to catch their comments. Three years ago, Michigan's John Engler and Massachusetts's William Weld addressed a half-empty room at a tiny Cato Institute conference that passed completely unnoticed by the outside world.

California's Chris Cox, who once couldn't get his name into a newspaper, was profiled on the front page of *The Wall Street Journal* as chairman of the House GOP Policy Committee. He has been reading David Stockman's book about why the Reagan Revolution failed. "There is a lesson to be learned," Cox said, "and that is don't be David Stockman. Don't think that you must accomplish everything instantly and that if you fail, God intended it to be the way it is.

"The federal government is 200 years old, and every single part of it was initially built for a reason," Cox said. "We can't simply assume it away. It's going to be hard work to take it apart as necessary, and leave in place what Americans truly desire in the 21st century."

The debate will no doubt be long and bloody, but what is most striking is how its terms have shifted. November's electoral quake shook Washington's foundation. Perhaps it will soon dissolve into the cynical posturing that usually prevails. But one could not help sensing that first week that the end of nearly half a century of Democratic rule might bring with it the end of the New Deal era of soft socialism. Who, after all, would have thought that the libertarian Cato Institute would ever be one of Washington's hottest think tanks?

Contributing Editor Carolyn Lochhead is Washington correspondent for the San Francisco Chronicle.

HENRY PAYNE

Cracked Bell

By James J. Heckman

The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life, by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, New York: The Free Press, 845 pages, $30.00

Intelligence is determined by race...
Intelligence is determined by shoe size...
IQ is based on the amount of chest hair...
Intelligence is based on forehead height...

Early reactions to the book in the popular press have been emotional and denunciatory, focusing almost exclusively on the authors' discussion of racial differences.

CHARLES MURRAY AND THE LATE Richard Herrnstein have produced a controversial and well-written book about human differences, the sources of human differences, and how we should respond to those differences. The early reactions to the book in the popular press have been emotional and denunciatory, focusing almost exclusively on the authors' discussion of racial differences and the genetic basis for those differences. This is unfortunate. The book is not devoted exclusively to a discussion of racial differences, although it certainly considers them in detail. It is obvious that most reviewers of the book have not read it as a whole, if they have read it at all. It is also clear that in an age of rampant egalitarianism, discussion of differences in cognitive skills remains taboo. The authors deserve much praise for discussing a forbidden subject and thereby initiating a public discussion that challenges the egalitarian presumptions of our day.

Like Robert Reich in *The Work of Nations* and Mickey Kaus in *The End of Equality*, the authors are concerned about the growth of economic and social inequality in American society, a topic that dominates many contemporary political discussions. Unlike those authors, Murray and Herrnstein probe more deeply into the personal sources of inequality, devoting considerable attention to the genetic component of personal differences and presenting fresh empirical evidence about an important relationship between their measure of IQ and success in society at large. Like Reich and Kaus, Murray and Herrnstein worry about the consequences for the social order of the growing inequality in economic and social success between the "haves" and the "have nots," and the social and economic partitioning of high-skill, high-IQ persons away from low-skill, low-IQ persons.

This 845-page book covers an enormous and impressive range of topics. Its numerous tables and charts make close reading a challenge. Indeed, all but trained social scientists will be intimidated by the statistical details and by the complicated arguments used by the authors. Even more forbidding to most readers will be the hundreds of pages of footnotes and appendix tables that document the statistical analysis underlying the arguments in the text. Despite all this, the book is organized in easily summarized sections. It is accessible at one level to all readers who are willing to skip the details.

The book contains four parts. Part I updates Herrnstein's 1973 book *IQ and the Meritocracy* and documents that American society has become more stratified on the basis of intelligence than it was even one generation ago. Merit—treated here as synonymous with IQ—has become concentrated in schools and the workplace. This increase in cognitive stratification results from the realization of the meritocratic vision of access to institutions based on individual ability. Social class and parental income play weaker roles in regulating access to education and jobs than at any time in American history.

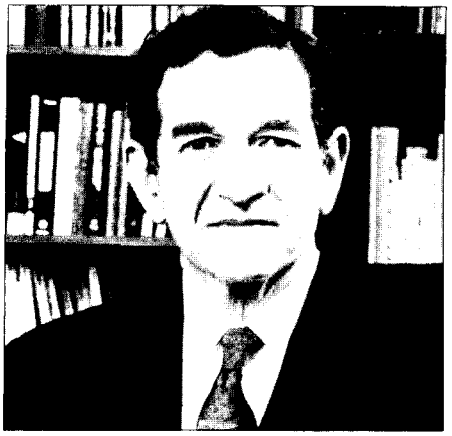
The authors go on to note a phenomenon not discussed in Herrnstein's book—that since the late 1970s, the economic returns to measured skills, and in particular education, have increased. This has created a growing gap between the wages and employment of the skilled and the unskilled. The authors note a strong, but by no means perfect, relationship between skill and IQ.

Part II presents original empirical research, combined with a synthesis of the existing empirical literature, that shows a strong relationship between the authors' measure of IQ and social performance. This portion of the book puts empirical flesh on Herrnstein's original bare-bones argument. Low-IQ persons are more likely to be in poverty, drop out of school, be unemployed or altogether idle, be on welfare, be bad parents, commit crimes, and withdraw from political activity than are high-IQ persons. In general, this relationship holds even after adjusting for the authors' measure of socioeconomic background.

The authors wish their readers to draw from this exercise the conclusion that nature—not just parental or social environment—plays an important role in explaining a variety of social pathologies. Taken literally, their research demonstrates that IQ, rather than socioeconomic background, plays the *dominant* role in generating differences in a variety of socially important outcomes among persons. The analysis uses data only for whites. By proceeding in this way, the authors establish the importance of IQ in accounting for individual differences without getting into the controversial issue of racial bias in IQ tests.

In Part III, they mention the unmen-

MIKE LUCKOVICH



Richard Herrnstein: Updating his earlier work, *The Bell Curve* argues that "merit" has become concentrated in schools and workplaces.

tionable by directly analyzing the sources of ethnic differences in social outcomes and the role of their measure of IQ in accounting for these differences. They firmly and rather convincingly refute the critics of IQ and aptitude tests who claim that the tests are racially biased and unrelated to true productivity in schools or the workplace. They discuss the well-documented disparity between the distributions of IQ for blacks and whites, along with other ethnic disparities. Their empirical work substantiates the role of IQ in accounting for a considerable portion of ethnic differences in socioeconomic outcomes and demonstrates the concentration of low-IQ persons (of all races) in a variety of pathological categories. The higher rate of reproduction and immigration among the lower-IQ groups also receives attention, along with the consequences of this phenomenon for the American gene pool. They claim that the average IQ is declining in the United States.

Part IV really consists of two separate sections. The first section builds on the first three parts of the book and discusses the implications of the authors' findings for social policy. Murray and Herrnstein present a pessimistic summary of efforts to raise cognitive ability through social programs. This review of the ineffectiveness of most social programs harkens back to Murray's *Losing Ground*, except that now the cognitive limitations of individuals rather than perverse incentives created by the programs lead to their failure. The authors discuss the "dumbing down" of American public education and the shift in educational expenditures away from gifted children. Under the aegis of promoting equality, Rawlsian educational policy has taken resources away from the able and given them to the less able.

They also discuss affirmative action in colleges and the workplace. Murray and Herrnstein make the simple, powerful, and apparently very controversial point that disparities in intelligence and abilities among ethnic groups, combined with equality of opportunity at the individual level, will produce demographic disparities in college attendance, job hiring, and promotion rates. Such disparities often lead to interventions by governments enforcing anti-discrimination laws.

Murray and Herrnstein argue convincingly that employment tests banned by the courts as discriminatory at least partly predict productivity and are, if anything, biased *in favor* of minorities. Further, they make the claim that prohibitions against using the tests impair economic productivity and that "race-normed" adjustments of test scores misclassify workers, create tokenism in the workplace, and often stigmatize the intended recipients of government beneficence. The press has attacked this section of the book, as well as the section on racial differences in IQ, as racist in tone and content. In fact, the authors advocate the nonracist policy of treating persons as individuals rather than as members of racial groups.

The last two chapters of the book abandon the empirical focus. The penultimate chapter presents a bleak vision of an IQ-stratified meritocracy with a cognitive elite increasingly isolated from the rest of society. In this worst-case scenario, the affluent and the cognitive elite merge interests, in part because many members of the cognitive elite have become affluent. Together they form a ruling class. A deteriorating quality of life emerges for the cognitively feeble, who become economically and socially dysfunctional. Unable to cope with the complexity of modern society, they become wards of the state.

In the final chapter, the authors turn to Murray's *In Pursuit* as an alternative to their bleak vision of a cognitively stratified social order. They harken to a communitarian ideal in which places are found for all persons in cognitively integrated local neighborhoods. Following Murray's previous book, they suggest that removing power from the center and returning it to the community will produce vital neighborhoods that will find a place for everyone and foster dignity and self-respect. Simple rules that everyone can understand, and simple morality and justice that clearly define what is right and wrong, are the essential features of a viable communitarian social order comprising persons with diverse cognitive skills.

A rigorous, well-reasoned challenge to contemporary presumptions about equality, egalitarianism, and the malleability of human beings is long overdue. Had the authors taken more care in presenting their evidence and summarizing that of others, and had they woven their argument more closely, their book would be that challenge. Unfortunately, it is not.

THE BOOK FAILS FOR FOUR MAIN REASONS. First, too much space is devoted to discussions of intrinsically irrelevant issues. Nothing central to the case for recognizing diversity in human abilities hinges on the issue of whether there is one "true ability" or whether there are multiple abilities—as common sense, much psychometric research, and the authors' own evidence indicate is the actual state of affairs. Despite this evidence, Murray and Herrnstein devote many pages to justifying a one-ability, or "g," model of human intelligence. Admitting that persons have multiple skills does not undermine the empirical case that heterogeneity in ability is an important fact of social and economic life. Indeed, acknowledging a multiplicity of skills emphasizes human diversity.

The long discussions of heredity also distract attention away from the main thrust of the argument and generate need-

less controversy. The authors acknowledge, as does most serious science on the matter, the difficulty of identifying separate genetic and environmental contributions to intelligence. Most scholars assign some weight to both sources, but the allocation of precise weights generates much well-deserved controversy. The authors fail to justify why it is useful to establish any particular set of weights or even a range of weights, except the special weight that assigns all credit to the genes.

This observation points to the second, more fundamental, reason why this book fails to provide an effective challenge to contemporary egalitarian social policy. One might oppose such policies on moral or ethical grounds. Instead, the authors choose an empirical approach. Yet they fail to develop the empirical case in a satisfactory or coherent manner.

Before I read this book, I thought that Murray and Herrnstein would do for policies aimed at reducing inequality what Murray did for poverty policy in *Losing Ground*, by documenting the failure of many social programs designed to boost the skills of the less able. Chapter 17 of their book discusses the *mixed* evidence on the success of early childhood interventions designed to boost IQ. By no means does the evidence they discuss rule out the possibility of boosting IQ through programs that enrich the learning environments of young children. Indeed, the authors acknowledge that there are strong indications that very intensive programs can be effective. Half-hearted interventions like Head Start are definitely not effective.

It is striking that the authors do not discuss the *costs* and *benefits* of various interventions. It is in these terms that public policy discussions regarding skill-enhancement programs are usually conducted. The authors seek to short-circuit all of the hard work required to make credible cost-benefit calculations by claiming that there is a genetic basis for skill differences.

But estimates of a genetic component of skills are irrelevant to the requisite cost-benefit analysis unless it can be established that *all* differences are genetic. No one, including the authors, claims that this is so. Only if all differences are genetic—and if no offsets to genetic endowments can be created by families, communities, or governments—would it be possible to use the information on the genetic contribution of skills to make the required cost-benefit analysis. In that extreme case, which no one accepts as empirically relevant, the costs of making change are infinite. Genetics and heritability determine all. Social programs cannot be effective.

Equally obvious is the point that knowing that all skill components are environmentally determined does not justify interventions. Knowing that we can teach calculus to a child with an IQ of 65 but only at an enormous cost would not justify a policy of doing so, except in the minds of zealots committed to extreme egalitarian visions. Discussions of nature versus nurture are irrelevant to practical policy discussions couched in terms of costs and benefits. An evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions is required to justify or oppose social policy designed to cope with inequality. The authors do not provide a systematic evaluation of such programs. *The Bell Curve* fails to present the hard information required to settle these matters on the factual grounds chosen by the authors.

THIS POINT IS PARTICULARLY TELLING FOR their assessment of education. The authors offer an inconsistent treatment of education throughout the book. Early on, they highlight the finding of many recent studies—that the economic return to education has increased in the past 15 years or so. The gaps between the wages of college-educated workers and less-educated workers has widened. This phenomenon has contributed to growing income inequality.

They also establish that more-able persons tend to attain higher levels of schooling. They acknowledge—and then go on to forget—that the relationship between education and ability is far from exact. In

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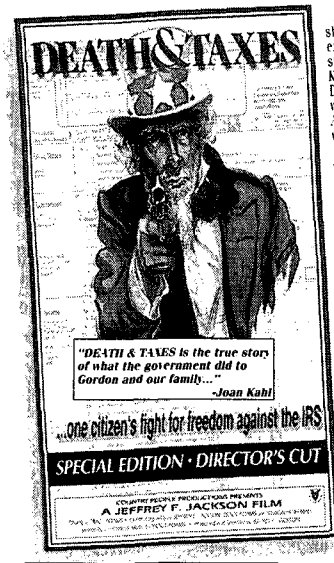
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fact, throughout much of the book, they *equate* ability and education and implicitly assume that the economic returns to ability drive the economic returns to education.

On the empirical grounds chosen by the authors, this implicit assumption is false. Their own evidence (buried in Appendix 6), as well as a vast literature in empirical social science, clearly indicates that controlling for ability *lowers* but does not eliminate the return to schooling measured in terms of earnings. The evidence on this point is consistent across many studies. Controlling for their measure of ability, the returns to education sometimes fall by as much as 25 percent, but they never go to zero.

Ability and education are not the same thing, and both have economic rewards. Accounting for ability weakens but hardly eliminates the role of education in raising earnings. On average, an extra year of schooling still increases earnings by at least a substantial 6 percent to 8 percent. So there is room for social policy to eliminate earnings differentials between persons of the same ability level. Neither *The Bell Curve* nor the literature on schooling provides much evidence on the all-important question of the efficacy of education as a tool for equalizing the earnings of persons of different ability levels.

What little is known indicates that ability—or IQ—is not a fixed trait for the young (persons up to age 8 or so). Herrnstein noted this in *IQ and the Meritocracy*. Sustained high-intensity investments in the education of young children, including such parental activities as reading and responding to children, stimulate learning and further education. Good environments promote learning for young children at all levels of ability. In this sense, there is fragmentary evidence that enriched education can be a good investment even for children of low *initial* ability, because it stimulates cumulative learning processes and may raise ability. There is much more negative evidence for adults, where ability is a more stable trait. For low-ability adults, there is little evidence that educational investments are socially profitable.

The authors also disregard much recent empirical evidence by Richard Murnane and others that indicates the increasing returns to the measures used by Murray and Herrnstein account for only a small portion of the recent increase in the economic return to schooling. While payments for ability have increased somewhat in the past 15 years, there remains a substantial increase in the payment for education unrelated to the authors' measure of ability.

It is unfortunate that the authors disregard this important evidence. Operating on the empirical playing field chosen by Murray and Herrnstein, a die-hard interventionist could find much credible evidence to support an active social policy to eliminate skill differentials. Their implicit claim that ability drives the economic return to education, and the recent increase in the economic return to education, fails to pass empirical muster.

THE THIRD SOURCE OF *THE BELL CURVE*'S failure lies in the details of its analysis of the impact of ability on measured outcomes such as earnings. In their empirical research, the authors examine how well one measure of ability explains a variety of economic and social behaviors. They pit their ability measure against a measure of the socioeconomic status of persons when they were children. The authors intend this contrast to reveal the relative importance of "genes" and "environment" in accounting for behavior. Outcomes are much more sensitive to their measure of ability than to their measure of socioeconomic status. Large changes in the socioeconomic variables have weak effects on the outcome measures, while small changes in ability have large effects on the same outcome measures.

This sort of empirical exercise prospers—or founders—on the details. The credibility of any empirical study depends on the care taken by the analyst in defining and measuring concepts, and in interpreting conclusions drawn from the data. It is at this point that the book becomes a policy polemic rather than a scholarly study of human differences.

Charles Murray: *The Bell Curve* ignores the differences between ability and education.

First, consider the definitions of the two key variables used in the authors' empirical study: IQ and family background. In their empirical analysis, the operational definition of IQ is the Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AFQT) score, which is based on an aggregation of a subset of 10 separate exams given to more than 12,000 youth in 1980. The youth were 15 to 23 years old when the tests were administered. These tests were designed to predict success in military training schools, and there is much evidence that they do so, although by no means are they 100-percent reliable. Most of these tests appear to be achievement tests rather than ability tests (i.e., they partly measure factual knowledge and not pure ability). A subset of four tests was assembled to define the Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AFQT) score used by Murray and Herrnstein.

Ironically, the authors delete from their composite AFQT score a timed test of numerical operations because it is not highly correlated with the other tests. Yet it is well known that in the data they use, this subtest is the single best predictor of earnings of all the AFQT test components. The fact that many of the subtests are only weakly correlated with each other, and that the best predictor of earnings is only weakly correlated with their "g-loaded" score, only heightens doubts that a single-

ability model is a satisfactory description of human intelligence. It also drives home the point that the "g-loading" so strongly emphasized by Murray and Herrnstein measures only agreement among tests—not predictive power for socioeconomic outcomes. By the same token, one could also argue that the authors have biased their empirical analysis against the conclusions they obtain by disregarding the test with the greatest predictive power.

More disturbing is the authors' treatment of family background. The index is based on parental education and occupational status, and on family income measured at one point in the entire life cycle of the child. For many young adults, the family-income measure is entirely missing and is omitted from the construction of the index.

The IQ measure used by Murray and Herrnstein is taken rather late in the life cycle of the child. (Recall that the IQ test is administered to youth 15 to 23 years old.) Many analysts suspect that IQ as measured by tests administered after early childhood reflects the outcome of social and cultural influences. The authors attempt to eliminate these influences by a standard statistical method called regression analysis.

But the standard statistical methods used by Murray and Herrnstein are vulnerable to measurement error. It would be incredible if 15 to 23 years of environmental influences, including the nurturing of parents, the resources they spent on a child, their cultural environment, their interaction with their children, and the influence of the larger community could be summarized by a single measure of education, occupation, and family income in one year. If environment is poorly measured but affects the test score—and there is solid evidence of environmental impacts on test scores—then Murray and Herrnstein's finding that IQ has a stronger impact on socioeconomic outcomes than the measured environment may simply arise from the poor quality of the measure of the environment.

The authors present evidence that IQ rises with age and with years of schooling completed. IQ may actually be a better measure of the environment facing children than the measure of environment used by Murray and Herrnstein. They use IQ to predict schooling, but schooling produces IQ. Hence, they are especially likely to find a strong measured effect of "IQ" on schooling.

The same remarks apply to their study of racial and ethnic differentials in socioeconomic outcomes. If racial differentials in environments affect ability and influence measured test scores, evidence that racial differentials weaken when ability is controlled for using regression methods does not rule out an important role for the environment in explaining performance in society. In the presence of measurement error in the environment, the authors' analysis will overstate the "true" effect of ability on those outcomes.

There are methods for addressing these problems, but Murray and Herrnstein do not use them. They should have tried a variety of measures of family background to explore the sensitivity of their reported results to the particular measures of family background they do use. A strict environmentalist could justifiably argue that the evidence reported by Murray and Herrnstein simply reveals the crudity of their measure of the environment and the strength of the correlation between the test score and their measure of environment.

One important technical point worth making here concerns the method used by the authors to measure standardized changes in IQ and family background. By its very construction as a measure that follows a bell curve, the "two-standard deviation" range in measured IQ used by the authors to gauge the sensitivity of outcomes to IQ represents a change in IQ ranging over 95 percent of the population. A "two-standard deviation" range of their family background index does not include 95 percent of the population, because that measure does not come from a bell curve. It may include as little as 75 percent of the population. By restricting the range of the environmental variable they understate the

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role of the environment in affecting outcomes relative to the role allocated to IQ.

FINALLY, THE BOOK FAILS DUE TO A LACK of coherence. The argument does not cumulate in a convincing way. Too many seams are visible. Its case against affirmative action and egalitarianism in education, and in favor of the use of testing in the workplace, does not require acceptance of a single ("g-loaded") scale of ability, or acceptance of the importance of heredity in producing socioeconomic inequality. The authors' evidence of growing stratification by cognitive ability in schools and workplaces does not require that they take a position on how the ability is produced. Yet the authors argue strenuously for their narrow view of ability and its heritability and thereby distract the reader's attention.

Nor do the two competing visions of the future of American society offered up in Part IV naturally flow from the arguments and evidence presented in the earlier parts of the book. The first dystopic vision relies on stronger sorting and heritability mechanisms than the authors have demonstrated actually operate in American society. Even if IQ is largely inherited, there is considerable scope for intergenerational economic mobility. The extreme pessimism of this scenario ignores the warnings issued by the authors that even among persons in the lowest ability grouping, there is still a lot of socially productive behavior. Their pessimistic vision relies on unsupported assumptions about the skill bias of future technological change and the inability of entrepreneurs —and social institutions—to efficiently utilize unskilled labor. This vision might be realized, but it reads more like a story borrowed from science fiction novels than a plausible extrapolation of existing social trends.

The second vision of communitarian harmony presented in the final chapter of the book is based on several implicit assumptions. The authors take it as self-evident that cognitively heterogeneous groups benefit both able and less-able members. That is an empirical statement about which the authors offer no evidence. If such heterogeneous associations are not mutually beneficial, strong forces of self-interest would arise that would promote segregation and separation along cognitive lines. In that case, their communitarian society of neighborhoods would only be viable if coercion were applied from central governments.

Simplifying the law, eliminating regulation, providing clearer moral and social rules, and eliminating restrictions on entry into business may differentially benefit the cognitively weak, but they are likely to benefit everyone else, too.

Cognitive stratification may be both economically efficient and socially desirable. Our cognitively stratified society may be a consequence of private choice, not governmental coercion. Murray and Herrnstein never discuss mechanisms or incentives that would lead persons to voluntarily embrace cognitively integrated local neighborhoods. They take it as self-evident that such neighborhoods would spontaneously emerge if central governments quit interfering in local communities.

Many of the other policy goals advocated by the authors could be embraced without any consideration of the problems—or benefits—of cognitive stratification. For this reason, their advocacy of these goals is not germane to this book. Simplifying the law, eliminating regulation, providing clearer moral and social rules, and eliminating restrictions on entry into business may differentially benefit the cognitively weak, but they are likely to benefit everyone else, too.

The authors' argument in support of local neighborhoods and small communities with cognitively mixed populations cries out for clarification. For each idyllic fable about the virtues of life in small communities, one could counter with fables of Peyton Place or the narrow-mindedness of the Babbitts of Main Street.

HAD THE AUTHORS BEEN MORE CAUTIOUS, they would have told the following defensible story: They have produced very convincing evidence that by the late teenage years, essential features of the skills and motivation of persons are determined. These features strongly influence individuals' performance in schools, in the market, and in other aspects of social life. The Armed Forces Qualifying Test seems to be a good measure of the skills affecting social performance. Using the components on which the test is based, rather than one composite score, would probably capture the diversity of abilities in the population even better.

The authors have no good way to separate genetic from social influences on social behavior. Their environmental data are too crude and the AFQT score they use is obtained too late in life to make a genetic-environmental distinction meaningful. The authors would require much finer measures of environmental variables than they have at their disposal to rule out the importance of family and society in determining individual outcomes.

Nonetheless, their evidence and the evidence assembled from many government skill-remediation programs for adults suggests that persons are not very *malleable* after their late teens or perhaps their early 20s. Successful interventions for such people are likely to be very costly. The literature suggests a particularly poor performance of educational remediation programs for adults of low cognitive ability as measured by AFQT and other cognitive tests.

To the extent that social interventions can upgrade skills, they are most likely to be effective when they are applied to the young. The fragments of evidence sum-

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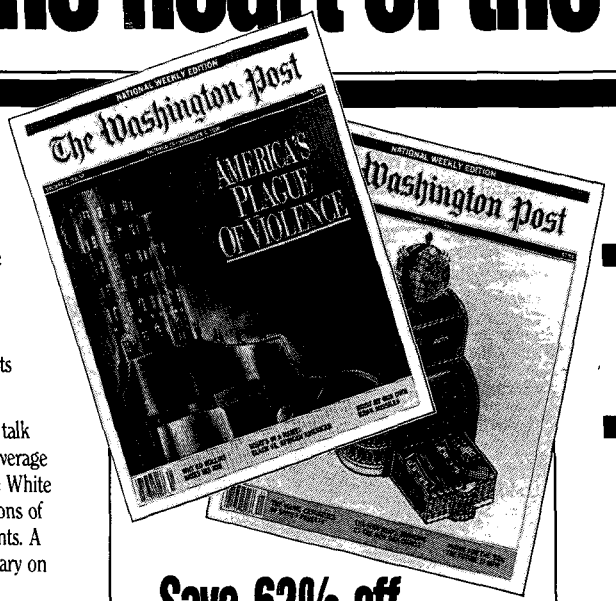

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marized in Chapter 17 of the book, and other evidence from high-intensity enriched-environment programs, point in this direction. This evidence is also consistent with the work of Thomas Sowell, who stresses the role of culture and values in shaping the expectations and motivations of young children. Job training and education are generally wasted on low-IQ adults. For this group, subsidies for employment may be justified, especially if work improves social behavior or is valued for its own sake. Economic efficiency is promoted by investing in the young. There is much evidence that learning is a cumulative, dynamic process. Learning begets learning. It is much easier to galvanize a young child than an illiterate young adult.

Future research should focus on growth and development in measured ability prior to age 15 (the age of the youngest person in the Murray-Herrnstein sample), because existing research indicates that values are formed and cognition is developed prior to that age. Genes may play some role, but culture and environment also contribute to ability and motivation. Much serious research in psychology indicates that motivation and attitude are as important—and possibly more important—for success than is raw IQ.

As for social policy, we should recognize that heterogeneity in experiences and endowments produces a wide range of cognitive skills and motivations. For a variety of reasons, treating persons fairly as individuals may lead to heterogeneity in outcomes among demographic groups. Denying individual heterogeneity by treating persons as members of demographic categories will produce disparities in productivity among demographic groups, reduce economic efficiency, and foster a sense of injustice among all participants in society.

James J. Heckman is Henry Schultz Professor in the department of economics, director of the Center for Social Program Evaluation at the Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies at the University of Chicago, and Fellow, American Bar Foundation.

Orwell That Ends Well

By Rich Karlgaard

Orwell's Revenge: The 1984 Palimpsest, by Peter Huber, New York: The Free Press, 374 pages, $22.95

GEORGE ORWELL: SINCE YOUR DAY something has appeared called totalitarianism.

Jonathan Swift: A new thing?

Orwell: It isn't strictly new, it's merely been made practicable owing to modern weapons and modern methods of communication.

Orwell himself penned those lines (and read them aloud on his BBC wartime broadcast in 1942) in "Jonathan Swift: An Imaginary Interview." While Orwell's sentiments were his own, he cut and pasted together Swift's from the Irish-born satirist's estimable *oeuvre*. The result is a virtual dialogue between two of Great Britain's sharper minds, one remembered chiefly for *Gulliver's Travels* and "A Modest Proposal," the other best known for his 1948 anti-totalitarian novel, *1984*.

Now Peter Huber, a Manhattan Institute fellow and *Forbes* columnist, has used the same technique to create *Orwell's Revenge: The 1984 Palimpsest*. (A palimpsest, the back cover helpfully reminds the reader, is a document that has been written upon several times, "often with remnants of earlier, imperfectly erased writing still visible.") Unlike Orwell's, though, Huber's instruments of inventive plagiarism aren't scissors and glue, but more modern ones: a Hewlett-Packard flatbed scanner, Calera optical character recognition software, the XyWrite III+ word processing program, and a fast 486 PC.

Peter Huber: Rewriting Orwell so telecommunications technology leads to freedom

First, Huber scanned *1984* and everything else by Orwell he could find into his computer: novels, essays, BBC broadcasts—all told, a whopping 9.5 megabytes of Orwellian thought. Then Huber went to work, constructing an imaginary conversation between himself and Orwell, deploying Orwell's own language and imagery.

The stunning result is two books, to be read simultaneously: a "novel" that stars a protagonist named Eric Blair (Orwell's real name) and picks up where *1984* leaves off, and a running criticism of the historical George Orwell's literary career and intellectual mindset.

The novel part is a fetching read. In it, Huber cleverly jujitsus Orwell's own words into startlingly different conclusions than they held in their original contexts. Black has indeed become white (but unlike in Orwell's dystopia, freedom is not slavery, nor ignorance strength). Instead, *1984*'s most memorable symbol of the all-pervasive state, the omnipresent telescreen, becomes an instrument of proletarian revival in Huber's hands. In Orwell's novel, the telescreen meant, "You had to live...in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard,

and...every movement scrutinized." But in Huber's world, rather than inhibiting activity, the telescreen breathes life into the soul and the marketplace and eventually brings down the government and its ministries.

As author of *The Geodesic Network* and one of the country's top telecom experts, Huber knows his networks and computers—better than Orwell could have known in 1948, certainly, or even today, were Orwell alive. (Orwell was, not surprisingly, something of a Luddite.) Early on in *Orwell's Revenge*, we are informed that the dumb-terminal telescreen network of *1984* was replaced by a client-server network. Why? Imperial overreach. The Ministry of Truth had "demanded a system powerful enough to reach every room, to revise every record, to overwhelm every other form of communication." And so the old wires were "ripped out, vast bundles of them, tons and tons of useless copper, replaced by a few dozen of the new, orange-rubber rings."

For 10 years, the new network does the trick. The system is "robust," it is "fault tolerant," it operates "peer-to-peer." No single screen, no single cable can bring down the whole network if it fails. The network itself is almost annoyingly simple. The cables run through the tunnels, with branches leading off into every apartment and office. Directly or indirectly, all points on the network are connected.

For Huber, of course, that interconnection is precisely the government's undoing. It isn't long before a few of the "phreaks"—the techno-wizards who turn the state's surveillance apparatus against itself—figure out the potential for decentralization inherent in the system. They begin altering the telescreens so as to shut off propaganda from the central ministries. That's step one. Better yet, they learn to exploit the peer-to-peer architecture to communicate among themselves. Result: Free thought and the marketplace are reborn.

MIDWAY THROUGH THE NOVEL, HUBER'S Eric Blair stumbles into what was once the worst part of Airstrip One (i.e., London) only to find that it has become the best part of town. "Soon the air was filled with a hubbub of similar human exchange," writes Huber. "The passers-by were increasing in number, and instead of shuffling along, they strode firmly down the road....The street was so crowded that you could only with difficulty thread your way down the alley between the stalls. The stuff on the stalls glowed with fine lurid colors—hacked, crimson chunks of meat; piles of oranges and green and white broccoli, stiff, glassy-eyed rabbits; live eels looping in enamel troughs; plucked fowls hanging in rows, sticking out their breasts like guardsmen naked on

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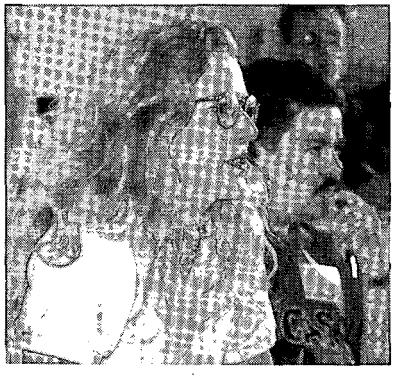

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parade. His spirits rose at the sight of all the activity. It was delightful—the noise, the bustle, the vitality. For a moment the sight of the street market persuaded him there was hope for England yet."

The government is powerless to stop these unintended consequences. No one in the ministries even knows how the network works anymore, since all the knowledgeable technicians have been long exterminated or shipped to labor camps. The government's own "experts" are stumble bums, and the portraits of them are among the book's funniest passages. At one point, for instance, Ministry official O'Brien (*1984* readers will remember him as Winston Smith's torturer), asks a lackey about the surveillance installations:

"Burgess twitched, and his face drooped. 'Well, it has to do with the blue box, you see. After the screen's mounted, we use the box. This part's really complicated. But it's in the manual—all in the manual.'

"'These manuals that you use—' O'Brien hesitated again. 'I wonder if there might be some simpler explanation of it all. Something for a nontechnical chap like me. Or do you—better still—that we might locate one of the engineers who helped write it? Someone from the '80s, perhaps?'

"Burgess gazed back expressionless. 'We could look. Can't say that I ever met any of the old guard. Most of them turned out to be saboteurs.' He spoke with increasing vigor, and the spittle began to gather at the corners of his mouth. 'Completely unreliable, most of them. Not really Party men at all.'"

Throughout *Orwell's Revenge*, Huber returns to a central question: How could Orwell, a writer so alert to the machinations and evils of totalitarianism, see capitalism and communications technology as tyranny's friend, rather than its undoing? Huber accuses Orwell of giving in to emotion. He hated the radio, and by extension all communications technologies, because of Josef Goebbels's brilliant use of them in spreading Nazi propaganda.

Orwell's contempt for capitalism was even less rational. Huber traces it to the Dickensian miseries young Orwell suffered at Crossgates, the boarding school he attended on scholarship before going on to Eton. Orwell wrote about it in his novel, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*: "The very rich boys were more or less undisguisedly favoured; the poor but 'clever' scholarship boys didn't go riding, didn't get a cricket bat, didn't get a birthday cake, were caned more often, were publicly reminded of their poverty, and were expected to be snivelingly grateful to Crossgates for its charity."

Huber's "palimpsest" should have come out 10 years earlier. After the collapse of communism, after Tiananmen Square, no serious thinker can credibly suggest that computers and advanced telecommunications favor the state.

If Huber's "palimpsest" has one major flaw, it is timing: It should have come out 10 years earlier. Not only because the publication date then would have matched *1984*'s famous title, but because the implications of computer networks as an instrument of freedom were less obvious a decade ago than they are today. After the collapse of communism, after Tiananmen Square, no serious thinker can credibly suggest that computers and advanced telecommunications favor the state.

In 1994, in fact, the argument has moved decisively in the other direction. Instead of arguing that emerging technologies will create a hyper-centralized brave new world, many now fret that ever-advancing PCs and broadband networks are balkanizing society into smaller and smaller niche markets. Critics from Charles Murray to Robert Reich look into the future and see an ever-wider skewing of the info-rich and the ignorant poor, with combustible consequences.

REASON readers will like how Huber cleverly addresses this important '90s debate. Late in *Orwell's Revenge*, he stages a debate-to-the-death between the high-ranking party official O'Brien and a jailed phreak:

O'Brien: "You will be astounded at how quickly your new world of free choice becomes ugly and depraved.... Free choice on the telescreen will bring about a frightful debauchery of taste.... kicking little girls in the head will be O.K.; a film of a woman defecating will be O.K....Place every telescreen under private control, and the masses will wallow in filth far worse than the rubbishy entertainment and spurious news the Party supplies today."

Phreak: "Some, as you predict, will anesthetize their minds with visual opiates peddled over the network. But others will use their new power to choose wisely. In the cataract of information of the telescreened world, the most important right will be the right not to listen, not to speak, and not to share one's thoughts, words or gestures. Freedom of thought, freedom of assembly and religion, copyright and privacy, all pivot on a single, higher right: the right to communicate by mutual consent with other individuals possessing the same dignity, the same power of choice. That is the promise of the telescreen."

O'Brien: "By encouraging necrophilic reveries, a depraved artist may do quite as much harm as by picking pockets at the races. Private pornography inspires public violence. Private scheming and conspiracy culminate in fraud, extortion, or blackmail. The individual's freedom becomes the community's slavery. Freedom is slavery."

Phreak: "Freedom is sanity....The telescreen will give us necrophilic reveries, but it will also create room for the art of angels. It will supply passion but also reason. It will spread propaganda but also

private discourse. It will give us spies, but also distance us from them. It will carry the proclamations of generals before battle, the speeches of fuhrers and prime ministers, the solidarity songs of public schools and left wing political parties, national anthems, temperance tracts, papal encyclicals and sermons against gambling and contraception—and it will also carry the chorus of raspberries from all the millions of common men to whom these high sentiments make no appeal. The network empowers electronic thugs at one end and the Thought Police at the other. But in the middles stand the great mass of men, simple, honest, and sane. So long as common men use the network too, their basic sanity will prevail. Freedom will be freedom."

O'Brien: "But not equality?"

Phreak: "No....Only one kind of human equality will survive the telescreen ....The only kind of equality that men have the power to affirm. It is equal opportunity—an equal chance to converse, trade and collaborate with others by mutual consent. The telescreen offers equal dignity, nothing more. All other kinds of equality belong to Big Brother."

O'Brien: "So your glorious fantasy is not so glorious after all....Your telescreen will create wealth, it will distribute culture, it will educate the masses. Equality is therefore inevitable. A socialist utopia is at hand. Why do you insist that equality will not come?"

Phreak: "Some will use their telescreens for education, others for lotteries. The talented or industrious will embrace the new opportunities; the lazy or foolish will sink into tele-induced stupor. Hierarchies will not disappear. They will simply come to mirror inequalities among men themselves."

With rigor and flair, Peter Huber has produced a palimpsest that no serious student of Orwell, totalitarianism, or freedom can afford to ignore. ®

Rich Karlgaard is the editor of Forbes ASAP, *a technology magazine based in Redwood City, California.*

How Green Is Our Valley?

By Alexander Volokh

Nature's Web: Rethinking Our Place on Earth, by Peter Marshall, New York: Paragon House, 513 pages, $29.95

No Turning Back: Dismantling the Fantasies of Environmental Thinking, by Wallace Kaufman, New York: Basic Books, 212 pages, $25.00

The Green Crusade: Rethinking the Roots of Environmentalism, by Charles T. Rubin, New York: The Free Press, 312 pages, $22.95

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "SAVE the earth"? In 1915, a Congregational hymn summed it up this way: "The Wilderness is planted, the deserts bloom and sing; on coast and plain the cities their smokey banners fling." Smoke used to be a beautiful thing. This was back when it was unheard of to oppose a policy with the question, "Ah, but how will it affect the trout?"

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be. Today, every major public-policy decision pays at least lip service to trout. The original environmental prophets are mostly forgotten, but their pearls of wisdom have become second nature to us anyway. "Small is beautiful." "Everything is connected to everything else." "Limits to growth." "Balance of nature."

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Wallace Kaufman: A kiwi fruit environmentalist—rough on the outside, green on the inside

But it's not that easy being green. Green is the color of so many contradictory movements that the only thing you can be sure of when you meet an "environmentalist" is that he will show some concern for a murky, nebulous entity called the "environment." Thus, there are hunting-and-fishing environmentalists who want to set aside wilderness areas for recreational purposes (i.e., killing fauna), and there are the animal-rights environmentalists to whom such activity is anathematic.

There are "Earth-friendly," pro-technology environmentalists who envision a world where we'll be industrialized, clean, and rich, and there are technophobic Jeremy Rifkin types who view any and all manipulation of Nature as a classic case of hubris. There are cost-benefit analysis environmentalists who assign prices to environmental resources and treat them like economic commodities, and then there are "crunchy" New Age environmentalists who espouse vegan lifestyles. And beyond all these, there are the radicals who see ecological devastation as a natural outgrowth of Christianity, Western civilization, rationalism, and capitalism, and yearn for a return to the good old days, when life was nasty, brutish, and short.

PETER MARSHALL, AUTHOR OF *NATURE'S Web: Rethinking Our Place on Earth*, belongs to the latter bunch. Jesus, he tells us, was very bad for the environment. He killed swine, cursed trees, and experimented with non-consenting dead fish. St. Benedict stole honey from innocent bees. St. Francis of Assisi considered all creatures his brothers and sisters but ate them anyway. In the 16th century, the anatomist Andreas Vesalius and the philosopher Francis Bacon, who dissected animals, also behaved badly.

Nature's Web is an account of "where our ideas about nature come from, why they are wrong, and how they can change," a reinterpretation of world philosophy which divides philosophers into two groups—individualistic, rationalistic, anthropocentric carnivores, and the good guys.

But even as Marshall tries to maintain such simplistic dichotomies, his book is riven by self-contradictions. On the one hand, he thinks of man as part of nature: "I consider man to be an animal and only differing in degree and not in kind from other animals....Strictly speaking, human rights should be considered a branch of animal rights."

At the same time, he steadfastly refuses to see anything human as part of nature, let alone a beneficial part: "I consider humans to be an integral part of nature, although they are also the beings most capable of interfering with its processes." But the idea that agriculture, or dams, or the economy might also be part of nature because we're just another species is never seriously considered.

Marshall is likewise uncomfortable with the notion that people aren't naturally kind to one another. Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Spinoza are dismissed as "misanthropes" because they entertained the notion that people can be cruel. "Fully developed people living in harmony with nature have no need for moral guidelines or maps to help them through the maze of life's choices," claims Marshall. "Their actions are spontaneously right, in keeping with the flow of things." Like Swift's Houyhnhnms, by nature people are reasonable, benevolent, perfectly sincere, morally restrained, and non-coercive.

And yet, the idea that the individual good and the collective good are in harmony also sits ill with Marshall. For instance, rather than serving as a convincing defense of free markets, Bernard de Mandeville's *The Fable of the Bees* instead "demonstrates the vileness of the human species by arguing that society like a hive of bees thrives on a system of mutual rapacity and exploitation." Adam Smith's invisible hand becomes "the hidden hand of God" which *transforms* self-interest into the general good. For Smith, of course, self-interest was identical to the general good—it needed no transformation and God had little to do with it. Not that Marshall doesn't believe in spontaneous order; it just wouldn't include anything like industry or a sophisticated economy.

Marshall accuses those who try to discover the secrets of nature of participating in the "rape of Mother Earth." He doesn't write off science completely, but he might as well. For instance, he speaks fondly of 17th-century scientist John Ray, who "stands in the long line of religious scientists who can see God at the end of their microscopes." But he has harsh words for anyone who tries to generate universal laws based on such observations.

Perhaps the oddest part of *Nature's Web* is Marshall's insistence that he is a "libertarian"—a word that he uses repeatedly about his own environmental program and his favorite philosophers (including the Taoists, the Iroquois, and Immanuel Kant). He reviles radical Earth First!-types because they're perilously close to "eco-fascism," and "ecotopia cannot be created by coercive means." His approach, which he terms "libertarian ecology," recognizes "the claims of the individual as well as those of the social and biotic community."

"Libertarian ecology," explains Marshall, will save the earth *and* avoid oppressive government. After all, "ecologically conscious people will not follow private interest but experience ever-widening identification....They will throw off the spirit of gravity, unify mind and body,

reason and imagination, and dance to the music of the spheres." Marshall's libertarianism is inspired by the notion that if rights are good, more rights are better. However, the definition of *rights* is a sticky business in *Nature's Web*. Traditionally, rights applied only to human beings because they alone can act volitionally, they alone can make purposeful decisions.

By finessing the point, Marshall doesn't have to draw distinctions between stones and humans, even ones as basic as "stones don't care" or "stones don't understand." Instead, stones have inherent value because they're "part of a system which makes up a living whole." Marshall stops short of positing "stones' rights," but even suggesting their moral worth is dubious.

After all, if every object on the planet has inherent value or moral worth, then any human action can, in theory, be banned. Everything we do affects something, and probably kills at least one thing—which means that either everything should be illegal, or someone's got to decide which human actions are stone-friendly and which ones aren't. Neither of those alternatives seems particularly "libertarian."

WALLACE KAUFMAN TURNS HIS BACK precisely on this sort of muddled thinking in *No Turning Back: Dismantling the Fantasies of Environmental Thinking*. "Nature does not care," asserts Kaufman, "Only we do. And because we care, we have made the world an ever more livable place for ourselves by using science and technology and by exercising our power of dominion, wherever it comes from. The exercise of this power is a natural act....We are doing what every animal in creation has tried to do, only we are doing it more successfully because we have imagination and technology."

Kaufman is good at myth control. Among the myths he takes on: 1) recycling is always good, 2) forests are disappearing and development is the bad guy, 3) global warming threatens life on earth, 4) greed causes environmental problems, 5) nature is always right, 6) "sustainable development" is a good thing, and 7) primitive people were smarter managers of nature than we are.

And he reminds us of certain key truths, such as: 1) nature has no will but ours, and 2) natural resources are almost all a state of mind. Most important, as his book's title indicates, there is no turning back. To go back to the Pleistocene *and* avoid untold human suffering is the wildest of pipe dreams.

Kaufman is also good at debunking environmental self-righteousness. Thoreau, for instance, went hiking at Walden Pond wearing rubber boots and drinking Indian

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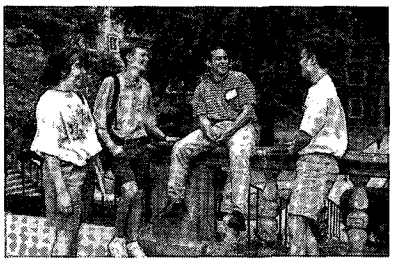

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tea. "The Romantics contentedly enjoyed the blessings of the very things they condemned," says Kaufman. "Such logical contradictions did not bother them greatly. After all, logic was the enemy of real understanding."

This smacks of *ad hominem* attack, though it has a purpose—to point out that most environmental philosophers can't possibly have meant what they were saying. Sadly, Kaufman's attacks don't stop there. Rousseau is "the French philosopher-poet who was wandering around Europe leaving his children on the steps of foundling asylums as he practiced being a 'natural man.'" "Kevin Costner, who has played a number of anticapitalist roles including Robin Hood, might be dismayed to know that the legend of Robin Hood celebrates the struggle of citizens to win property rights from their government." These characterizations are gratuitous and don't advance Kaufman's argument. Neither do sweeping accusations that the green movement is dictatorial and undemocratic, or that "environmentalists know little of history in general and even less of economic history."

UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN HE GETS BEYOND attack mode and moves into public-policy overdrive, Kaufman's own consistency becomes an issue. For instance, Kaufman charges that the Endangered Species Act saves no species, that it is an attack on development, that it serves the interests of an elite keen on preserving wilderness at someone else's expense, and that the economic and scientific advantages of biodiversity are marginal. Still, he wants to save ecosystems anyway because "when we lose a species, we often lose part of our own story, our own biological genealogy and family album."

Kaufman is vague because he wants to bash mainstream environmentalism while accepting its premises. He is a kiwi fruit environmentalist—rough on the outside, green on the inside. Thoreau believed that in "Wildness" is the preservation of the world; Kaufman believes that "in civilization is the salvation of wilderness and of nature in general." Kaufman calls these points of view "opposite," but they're not. Both he and Thoreau like wild things. His beef with the environmentalists is over means, not ends. That frees Kaufman to wax eloquent over the power of the market. In the end, though, he wants to do the same sort of environmental management, just with market-based regulations.

Kaufman tells us that "with a population of six billion and growing, we must manage nature for its sake and ours," but what he means is that technology is good because it can bring back extinct species and restore wetlands and old-growth forests. No word on why all that is "for our sake," or why we would want to recover ecosystems, especially if human impact on the environment is just part of nature.

Environmental popularizers should stop talking about the "environment," a word which means everything and nothing, start talking about individual problems, and avoid grandiose, global schemes in favor of smaller-scale, localized solutions.

WHILE *NO TURNING BACK* FAILS FINALLY to "dismantle" environmental thinking, Charles Rubin's *The Green Crusade: Rethinking the Roots of Environmentalism* gets the job done. Rather than look hundreds of years back for the roots of our understanding of the environment, Rubin concentrates on six recent gurus of the environmental movement: Rachel Carson and Barry Commoner on chemicals, Paul Ehrlich and Garrett Hardin on population, and the Club of Rome and E.F. Schumacher on economic growth.

These are inspired choices. Carson, Ehrlich, and the Club of Rome are the great green popularizers, dealers in hope and fear who were able to make people think that there was a real and urgent problem, but who were also largely unaware of what the world they were advocating would look like. Commoner, Hardin, and Schumacher filled the void by laying out the relevant moral, political, and economic principles. Rubin convincingly points out the utopian fantasies underlying their visions and explores how the belief that society can be organized according to one principle makes their thought totalitarian.

Hence, Rachel Carson blamed environmental degradation on big business profits and called for a reevaluation of our relationship with nature but made no sustained criticism of either the economic system or of modern industry. Barry Commoner later revealed that guiding policy by ecological principles would require planning, in particular rule by environmental experts. To avoid the problems of totalitarianism, Commoner advocated global democratization as well. Historical evidence to the contrary, Commoner apparently believed that democracy and planning were likely to be consistent, and that planning was likely to avoid being centralized and repressive.

Paul Ehrlich charged that population growth would lead to famines, plagues, and wars, and advocated "voluntary" birth control programs to be overseen by a Department of Population and Environment, "a powerful government agency" which would, among other things, prohibit TV shows featuring large families. His admiration for Chinese population policies, though, left him open to the charge of being unclear on the concept of ethics. Garrett Hardin developed a more precise picture of what a low-population world would look like—"a world of more or less separate, more or less antagonistic units called (most generally) tribes," coupled with eugenic policies enforced by some administrative body. Hardin acknowledged the danger of tyranny and exhorted us to be inventive and figure out "who will guard the guardians," but finally dealt

with the problem by ignoring it.

The Club of Rome, authors of *The Limits to Growth*, "the most influential book ever written by a computer," recommended running society according to a "master plan" or "blueprint" that would ensure "organic growth." This would be clearly totalitarian, if we were given any clue on what the plan was or how to implement it.

E. F. Schumacher was clearer about the kind of world we should aim for—"small is beautiful," so we should follow "traditional wisdom" and adopt "intermediate" or "appropriate technology," in which every part would serve a well-defined function. Schumacher was wary of centralized power, though he did admire Mao Tse-Tung. But wouldn't Schumacher's admiration for "traditional wisdom" merely replace the technocratic society with a world of unthinking deference to sages? And if traditional wisdom dictates not only social goals ("small") but also the means to achieve these goals ("intermediate technology"), is this not a recipe for totalitarianism? Schumacher did not say.

Rubin then turns to "deep ecologists" such as Arne Naess and Paul Shepard, self-professed unmakers of civilization who openly scoff at their environmentalist forefathers for being too soft on the modern world. Deep ecology is chiefly against anthropocentrism and in favor of "biocentrism," "ecocentrism," or "biospherical egalitarianism," and therefore thinks little of individual lives, whether human or non-human. It advocates "bioregional organization" (i.e., running human life in accordance with "natural constraints"), a sense of rootedness, and a ritualization of life which includes the recovery or recreation of primal rituals. The overt totalitarianism here barely needs pointing out; what does need pointing out is how undeep it is.

Deep ecologists want to return to the hunter-gatherer lifestyle, but also would like to keep artificial food production and "academic, artistic, skilled or professional" occupations. They want a world of small, isolated communities, explaining that such a world would be less warlike (though this is unlikely without a global policing authority or a universal moral principle—attributes of the despised modern world). They reject rationality and look forward to a new being that might overcome the limitations of *logos*. As Rubin puts it, "if there were a *deep* ecology that persisted in asking why and how, it would show the shallowness of those who have appropriated that name."

Finally, Rubin analyzes the major critics of the environmental movement. He is only mildly approving of such writers as Ronald Bailey (*Ecoscam*) and Michael Fumento (*Science Under Siege*), who are in the business of systematically debunking the green scares of the week. Rubin charges that they criticize environmentalism without coherently saying what they're for, and that they defend capitalism on economic grounds without understanding the connection between capitalism and liberty. Rubin also discusses Aaron Wildavsky and Mary Douglas who, in *Risk and Culture*, argue that environmentalists choose risks of concern based on cultural prejudices. He is critical of them too, because they don't say why the environmental cultural prejudice is worse than any other one.

I think Rubin is being harsh on the Baileys, Fumentos, Wildavskys, and Douglases of the world; deflating apocalyptic claims and pointing out cultural bias are valuable things. And anyone who claims that Bailey and Fumento don't understand the importance of liberty must not have read them very closely.

But Rubin's final advice is worth remembering. Environmental popularizers should respect the scientific method in their writings. We should stop talking about the "environment," a word which means everything and nothing, and start talking about individual problems. And we should avoid grandiose, global schemes in favor of smaller-scale, localized solutions.

The strength of *The Green Crusade* is its studious avoidance of generalizations about the environmental movement. The best argument against people like Peter Marshall is perhaps his own book. But fully understanding why he's wrong requires more than perusing a screed like *No Turning Back*. *The Green Crusade* makes it clear that, when talking about utopian movements that hold up *one* principle—for instance, environmental quality—as the paramount virtue, we shouldn't be asking, "Why are such movements totalitarian?" Instead, we should be asking, "How could they *not* be?" ®

Alexander Volokh is an assistant policy analyst at the Reason Foundation.

Acid Test

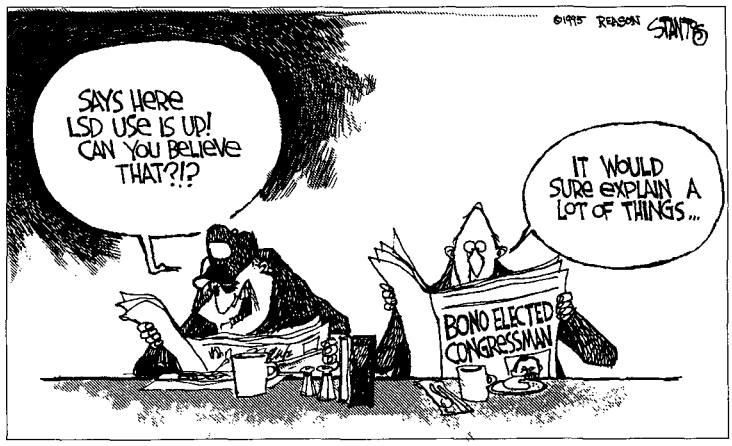
By Jacob Sullum

LSD: Still with Us After All These Years, edited by Leigh A. Henderson and William J. Glass, New York: Lexington Books, 163 pages, $22.95

In June 1993 Ann Landers ran a letter from a reader who had recently seen an article "about how LSD is making a big comeback among the youth of America"—the kind of story that has appeared in newspapers and magazines with some regularity during the past few years. "I was a teenager in the 1960s," he wrote, "and although I was never involved in the drug scene, I remember hearing a lot of horror stories about young people jumping in front of trains, off roofs, and out of windows while under the influence of LSD. I am very concerned for this new generation of LSD users." The reader urged Landers to publish accounts by

former acid users of "how this drug ruined their youth and possibly their adult years as well," along with letters from people who had "lost loved ones because of LSD."

Landers agreed there was cause for alarm. "The prospect of this dangerous drug making a comeback is bone-chilling," she replied. "This mind-altering drug has been responsible for many deaths. Flashbacks, which can occur years after the user has sworn off the drug, can be frightening."


©1995 REASON STANTIS
SAYS HERE LSD USE IS UP! CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?!?
IT WOULD SURE EXPLAIN A LOT OF THINGS...
BOND ELECTED CONGRESSMAN

This exchange illustrates how the conventional wisdom about LSD is propagated: People who don't know what they're talking about pass on hearsay and misinformation, blithely reinforcing each other's ignorance. As Leigh A. Henderson, an epidemiologist, and William J. Glass, a drug-abuse treatment specialist, note in their introduction to *LSD: Still with Us After All These Years,* this ignorance is all the more remarkable given half a century of experience with the drug, including more than a decade of legal use in psychotherapy, hundreds of clinical studies, and recreational use by millions of Americans since the early 1960s. This fascinating book summarizes that history and describes the findings of research on the current LSD scene sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Ann Landers ought to read it.

IF SHE DID, SHE WOULD LEARN THAT THE "big comeback" of LSD looks more like a blip. "After the intense interest and experimentation it generated in the late 1960s and early 1970s," Henderson writes, "LSD use has settled into an entrenched pattern among a limited population....The level of LSD use has varied little between the late 1970s and early 1990s." Past-month use of LSD by high-school seniors, for example, has been around 2 percent since 1975. (In the general population, the corresponding figure is less than 0.3 percent.)

Landers might also reconsider her assertion that LSD "has been responsible for many deaths." In general, Henderson writes, "LSD appears to pose few if any risks to physical health....Severe adverse reactions to LSD are rare, and death due to an overdose of LSD is essentially unknown." Fears that the drug might cause brain damage, genetic abnormalities, or insanity have not been substantiated. And while LSD can impair judgment, thereby contributing to accidents, so can other, more popular drugs, including alcohol.

As for the LSD flashback, it can probably best be understood as a sudden, vivid recollection of a dramatic, emotional experience—a phenomenon that is not limited to drug users. Contrary to popular belief, flashbacks are not caused by brain damage or LSD residue, and they are generally quite brief. *Pace* Ann Landers, Henderson reports that flashbacks "seldom occur more than a few months after the original trip." Furthermore, "a large proportion of those experiencing flashbacks (35 to 57 percent) have reported finding them pleasant (a 'free trip')." It's hard to imagine Landers noting that "flashbacks can be enjoyable."

Which is precisely the point. Even when anti-LSD propagandists are not spouting nonsense, they talk only about the drug's potential drawbacks, creating the impression that LSD generally leads to bad trips, horrible accidents, and scary flashbacks. Clearly, this cannot be true. If it were, personal observation and word of mouth would long since have eliminated LSD use, and the drug warriors would have nothing to worry about. So *LSD* begins with an obvious yet frequently overlooked point: Taking LSD is *fun.* True, it's a kind of fun that many people (not just Ann Landers) do not understand, which is one reason LSD use remains concentrated among a small percentage of middle-class white males in their late teens and early 20s. But by and large, the pleasure that people get from LSD is worth the cost involved.

The initial cost is quite low, especially compared to other drugs. A dose sufficient to produce a trip of five to seven hours can be had for a few dollars. But despite the low price, there is little risk of compulsive use. You have to set aside a significant block of time for each trip, and tolerance develops quickly (if you take the drug every day, it stops having the desired effect). Which is not to say that people never take LSD more often than is prudent. The book describes users who became obsessed with the drug, spending most of their time tripping or recovering from trips. But this pattern is rare. Indeed, most people who try LSD use it only a few times.

ALTHOUGH LSD IS A VERY POWERFUL substance—less than 100 micrograms is enough for a trip—the user's state of mind and environment can have a decisive impact on the drug experience. Bad trips generally result from taking the drug in the wrong mood, the wrong setting, or the wrong company. In Chapter 1, "What Is a Trip—And Why Take One?," James MacDonald and Michael Agar describe several bad trips, all of which were characterized by a loss of control caused by unexpected developments (an argument, the arrival of police). Experienced users learn to drop acid with friends in secure, predictable situations. MacDonald and Agar speculate that this requirement

SCOTT STANTIS

may help explain why LSD is not popular in the inner city. A threatening, chaotic environment is not conducive to a good trip.

"The irony," note MacDonald and Agar, "is that one objective of a trip is to lose control, but loss of control is the cause of a bad trip." LSD users seek a *controlled* loss of control, an experience something like a roller-coaster ride, where there is a predictable beginning and end, where the sense of danger is part of the thrill but the true risk is minimal. The best cure for a bad trip is the simple reassurance that the experience will pass.

As Henderson notes, the term *hallucinogen* is something of a misnomer, since neither LSD nor the other drugs classified under that label produce true hallucinations. The user is aware that the distortions and illusions triggered by LSD are not real. In this respect, an LSD trip is analogous to a lucid dream.

On the other hand, dream images are generally more vivid and complete than LSD images. In this sense, what you see on an acid trip pales in comparison with what you see every night when you go to sleep. And LSD trips are tied to reality in a way that dreams are not. The wall is not really undulating, but the wall is there; the light is not really dancing, but the light is there. LSD lets the user see familiar things in a new and interesting way. It's not hard to understand why this would appeal to a bored teenager.

LSD users seek a *controlled* loss of control, an experience something like a roller-coaster ride, where there is a predictable beginning and end, where the sense of danger is part of the thrill but the true risk is minimal.

And it's not hard to understand why it would frighten people like Ann Landers. Dreams, after all, are restricted to sleep. Even if they can be more convincing and dramatic than an acid trip, they do not reach out and grab reality. Still, in trying to fathom the LSD experience, it's worth reflecting on the fact that dreams, for all their irrationality and frivolity, appear to be indispensable. Subjects deprived of REM sleep (the phase in which dreams occur) start to get loopy pretty quickly. To keep our sanity, it seems, we need to lose our minds now and then.

Contributing Editor Jacob Sullum is articles editor at National Review.

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Last Tango for Socialism

By Thomas W. Hazlett

Statism vs. the world's poor

OF ALL THE INANITIES SPOUTED IN the recent "debates" over NAFTA and GATT, the most outrageous —a very competitive title—concerned the contempt with which Americans on the left (Jerry Brown, Ralph Nader) and right (Ross Perot, Pat Buchanan) dismissed "cheap foreign labor."

The exploitable populist fear underlying every advance of international commerce is the threat that somewhere, in a place far different from our own, people far different from us will rise up and *take our jobs*. We will be helpless, hapless, superfluous—these people will eat dirt for dinner, sleep standing up, and produce twice what we can at one penny a day. How can we possibly compete against these alien life forms?

Defenders of rational discourse, including in this very lucky instance White House spin doctors, dwell on the inaccuracy of those claims. They pound home the lesson that "comparative advantage" makes the whole pie bigger. I know all about gains from trade; I love and cherish them (on the blackboard and in real life). But what is ugliest about the "cheap foreign labor" argument is its utter brutality. Scratch the surface of the (flawed) economics and you arrive at a horrendously inhumane moral supposition: Screw those poor bastards—they'll outcompete us just for a meal!

If free trade really did downsize domestic incomes, it is *only* because the poor (them over there) are getting richer while the rich (us here at home) are getting poorer. Tossing out any gains from trade puts one in a zero-sum world where our incomes drop because wages are equalizing and foreign workers are getting more than they get now. More than they deserve, certainly. After all, they were born poor. They shouldn't mind it as much as we Americans, born to a high station in life.

Despisers of the market system once held the moral high ground. It was a stretch to argue, without giggling, that West Germany was less efficient than East Germany when the capitalists were driving Beemers and Mercedes and the socialists were putting about in Ladas and Skodas (Yugos being entirely out of their price range). But, the tale went, it was only in the meanness and harshness of the marketplace that such brutal efficiencies could be squeezed. "From each according to his ability" was much kinder and gentler, and a whole lot more equitable.

With the anti-market types now boastfully abandoning any pretense of fairness, going so far as to demonize the earth's downtrodden, the intellectual victory of capitalism is complete. It is both cushier *and* more conscionable—a double whammy in the war of ideas.

THE ULTIMATE MARKET TEST OF THE MARket system is that the world's poor are jumping statism's sinking ship. In a watershed election just passed, the Brazilian electorate was faced with a choice between a hard-left union organizer promising massive state intervention to help the disadvantaged, and a radical free-market professor who advocates strict anti-inflation measures, dramatic reductions in public spending, and widespread privatization and deregulation of state monopolies. The capitalist slam-dunked, getting elected by an overwhelming majority in this country of 150 million—60 million of whom live in abject poverty. It is difficult to ascribe this mandate to right-wing talk radio or Republican dirty tricks.

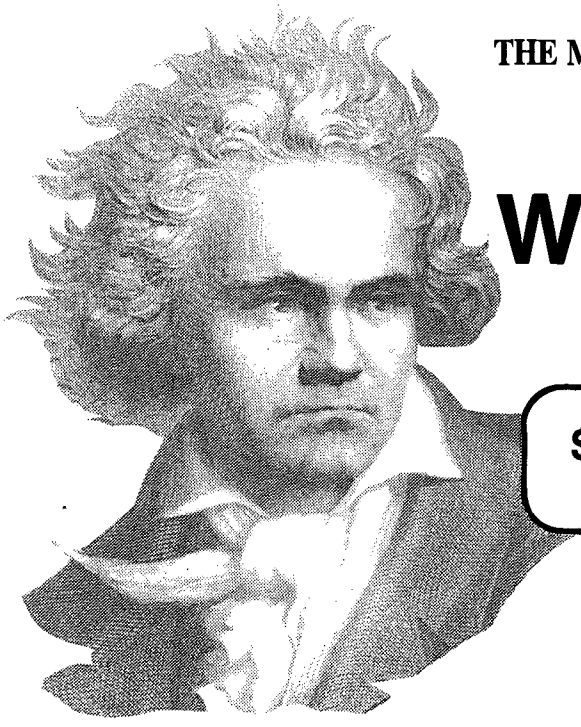
Or to the sociologists at Yale, Oxford, and Stanford with whom the new Brazilian president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, once taught and fantasized. Formerly an oracle of redistribution, Cardoso —an author of 21 books who was jailed by the Brazilian junta that ransacked the country between 1965 and 1984—has gotten religion, apparently in the Church of the Chicago Boys. As finance minister, his conservative monetary policy cut inflation from 50 percent per month to 2 percent and gave him a popular national platform from which to advocate sweeping market-oriented measures.

The class struggle has taken on a new character. Cardoso's deepest pool of support came from minimum-wage workers who flocked to him because he was credible in his pledge to reduce inflation. At 50-percent inflation per month, "Are you better off than you were four weeks ago?" becomes one hell of a campaign slogan. And Cardoso's staunchest opposition lurks in the "selfish bureaucrats and grasping politicians," as B. J. Cutler of Scripps-Howard put it. Some 2 million highly paid federal employees detest the program espoused by Cardoso and will try every trick to see that the state does not wither away.

It has been a confusing century, with market forces condemned by both great poets and opportunistic fixers. For a time they snookered the upper classes into believing that God preferred socialism and the underclasses into believing there was money in it for them. In their hearts, the statists believed that their schemes would humanize capitalist competition.

The apologists for an administered order, both at home and abroad, have now been reduced to defending rich workers against the rising aspirations of the poor. Today they have sacrificed not simply their analytical skills, but their souls.

Contributing Editor Thomas W. Hazlett teaches economics and public policy at the University of California, Davis.



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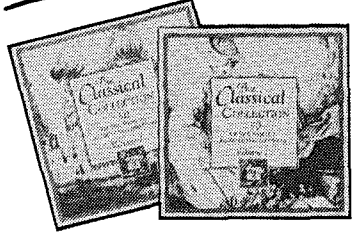
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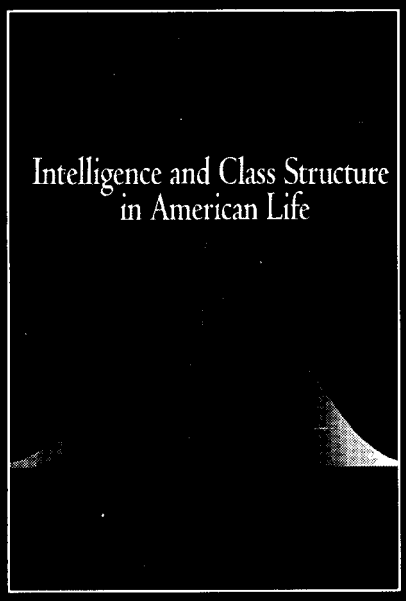

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